


Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on Monday 18th January 2024

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Ben Owen, Chair
Andrew Cropley, Principal and Chief Executive Officer
Andrew Spencer
Spencer Moore
Jane Peacock

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience
Diane Booth, Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality
Nikki Slack, Assistant Principal: Health, Education and Service Industries
Sarah Morley, Assistant Principal: Quality and Standards
Kirsty Walsh, Assistant Principal: Engineering
Jane Fishwick, Assistant Principal: Academic, Creative, Community, Digital and Professional Studies
Amaya Waddingham, Student Governor
Morgan Williams, Student Governor
Eloise Hopkinson, Clerk to the Corporation

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
1	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> The chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on agenda items to be discussed. No specific declarations were made and standing declarations were noted.		
2	<u>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Apologies for absence were received from David Gillies, Scott Smith and Phil Clark.		
3	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH NOVEMBER 2023</u> The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions. AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 th November 2023. There were no matters arising.		

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4 **ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

The committee were happy to note the content of the update provided. It was agreed that the employer feedback was a valuable contribution.

5 **BALANCED SCORECARD REPORT AND ANNUAL KPIS – 2023/24**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality gave a verbal update, informing governors that all items to be covered can be found in detail within the other reports on the agenda.

AGREED:

- To note the content of the update provided.

6 **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN 2023/24 – PROGRESS UPDATE**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented her detailed report, focusing particularly on apprenticeships and attendance. Key matters highlighted were:

- Attendance is lower than the college's expectation (90% or above) at 85.8%, which is broadly the same as in term 1 last academic year. The college is struggling to return attendance to pre-pandemic levels, which is a national issue.
- Attendance in both English and maths has improved slightly at 78.5% and 80.5% respectively.
- The college has employed a standards coach to work with certain areas where attendance is lower. This person will spend one day a week looking at what more can be done and supporting teachers and heads of department to drive improvement. Much activity has already taken place. The coach is focusing improving maths and English across the board but with particular targets being construction, hair, beauty, sport and business. This work is led by the assistant principal: quality and standards and is going well.
- Apprenticeships attendance shows an improvement in comparison to the end of the previous year but remains lower than pre-pandemic.

One governor questioned whether the reports of other colleges struggling to get to pre-pandemic levels of attendance is anecdotal or benchmarked. It was confirmed that nothing has been benchmarked but many colleges are reporting the same. The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience reported that schools are saying the same.

Another challenge from the committee was around the impact this focus on supporting students has on teachers, and it was confirmed that software has been purchased to aid staff, with examples given as follows:

1. Century Tech provides English and maths initial assessments and teaching and learning tools. This uses artificial intelligence (AI) to provide tailored learning for students based on their initial

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assessment. It can also be tailored to schemes of learning to provide further flexibility.

2. Teachermatic will provide support in other subjects. Again, this uses AI to write lesson plans and other pieces of documentation, which will help with workload.

The negative impact that poor attendance has on learning was discussed, and attendees indicated that the college is really trying to improve this situation. The academic staff governor confirmed that the attendance chasing team is really alleviating the strain on teaching staff in this regard.

One governor reported that, anecdotally, the attendance issues seen in colleges are now working through to undergraduate level. A reluctance to undertake industry placements is being seen, and he indicated that this will take a few years to work through. It was agreed that more work will be needed, but the situation is being monitored and it is hoped that what is already in place will ensure substantial improvement.

- There are currently no concerns in relation to apprenticeships retention.
- Health and social care retention is low, but this is due to the decision made to the college to move away from these qualifications. There is a similar position in construction due to the transfer of electrical apprentices to JTL Training.
- Future years do not currently present a concern.
- The most recent dashboard (at the close of R14) showed that the college 'required improvement' in three accountability areas; however, this was some time ago, so the vice principal has asked the head of management information systems to predict where the college should be at this point. This prediction shows that the college should be back on track for withdrawals, and it should only now be achievement that is flagged as 'at risk'.
- Meetings have continued with heads of department and assistant principals prior to the apprenticeships monitoring meetings. These meetings are used to look at learners who are past their expected end dates.
- The apprenticeships quality coach has continued to monitor the position and send out reports on a weekly basis. Heads of department and assistant principals have been using these reports with their teams, and a reduction has been seen in those learners past their expected end date.
- The vice principal indicated that some learners are past expected end date due to delays in endpoint assessments (EPAs), and the college is monitoring this so that the EPA organisations can be approached where there is an issue. All aspects of this data are being forensically monitored.

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One governor questioned whether this amount of scrutiny is seen as a positive or a negative thing by staff. The academic staff governor indicated that staff understand it is necessary and, in his area, there is a lot of passion behind data monitoring and ensuring learners are on track. The principal indicated that efforts have been made to take this beyond purely data monitoring and ensure that there have been real reasons behind the actions taken. Curriculum teams have been given support where needed. Those curriculum areas that still have poor data is still poor have suffered with ongoing staffing challenges, and it is understood that this causes challenges in relation to catching up. Where it is known that there is a reason behind the data, a commonsense approach is being taken and, where appropriate, monitoring is dialled back so as to not overburden staff.

One of the college's local links at the Department for Education is scheduled to attend next week's apprenticeships monitoring meeting.

The principal explained to governors that apprenticeships have come a long way, even if this is not necessarily reflected in the data. The vice principal: curriculum and quality agreed, stating that, had the college not taken the decision to prioritise quality over data with the removal of health and social care and electrical apprenticeships, the data would be well above the national rate. However, this was definitely the right decision for the college.

The chair queried whether employers are supportive in relation to attendance issues. The vice principal reported that, in the main, they are supportive and staff do inform them where there are concerns. However, the changes from frameworks to standards have taken time to filter through, and this means that there is better buy-in from some employers than from others. However, colleagues are striving to improve both employers' and learners' understanding of the requirements of an apprenticeship.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

7 **SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT – EXCEPTIONS REPORT 2023/24**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her detailed report. Key matters highlighted were:

- There has been a slight increase in safeguarding incidents reported through CPOMS.
- In November, there was a large increase in referrals to external agency. The college is working with two students in particular who are incredibly vulnerable, and there are weekly meetings with social care professionals to discuss their needs (more meetings than this were required in November).
- In late October, some students were involved in some criminal activity which required police involvement.

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- High numbers of students are open to social care, with 17 open on a child in need plan and 15 closed or withdrawn. This is unprecedented and also comes with a large number of vulnerabilities.
- Two students are open to a harmful sexualised behaviours panel, but one of these will close in March as they turn 18.
- Three students are open to social care's sexual exploitation panel and risk assessments are in place.
- There has been an increase in harmful sexual harassment and violence concerns. However, on the whole, these are lower-level concerns surrounding inappropriate comments and, sometimes, touching at the lower end of the spectrum.
- The largest safeguarding issue at the moment is that there have been a significant number of concerns around mental health and wellbeing, suicidal thoughts, etc., and both internal counselling services and CAMHS are stretched.
- The college has seen an increase in students being either the victim or perpetrator of community-based violence.
- The college conducted an exercise with search dogs in December at Station Park, following receipt of an anonymous tip-off around drug use. A private company was hired to provide this service as the police were unavailable. 11 students were pinpointed by the dogs, three of whom did have small amounts of cannabis and eight of whom turned out to only have food. The providers of the service were good at speaking to students about what was happening, and the uniformed protective services students also got involved and benefited from this as a learning experience. The company will be brought back to carry out a similar exercise at the other sites. It was confirmed that no concerns have been raised as a result of this activity.
- On 15th December, there was a revision of the Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People guidance. There is very little that will directly impact the college, but chapter 2 of the guidance outlines the role of education. Furthermore, there is a heightened acknowledgement that education providers do have a role to play, and it is expected that someone will have to attend a board.
- The college now has an overarching safeguarding and Prevent risk register which has been drafted and attached for governors to comment upon and approve.
- Progress made against KPIs has been good so far. The college has reduced the gap in retention of care experienced young people, but this could be better. The vice principal has a meeting in her diary next week with the Nottinghamshire County Council assistant virtual head and the YMCA. The college sees a drop in engagement from students when they enter YMCA accommodation, and this needs to be discussed.

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The staff governor notified the vice principal of a new tool in Microsoft Teams which enables the reporting of posts made by someone else. This can then be reviewed and actioned via the Microsoft compliance administrator. This gives the college an additional opportunity to be able to capture inappropriate messaging, with context, that Smoothwall might not be able to pick up (for instance, if this was sent via a phone). This is likely to increase the number of low-level concerns raised and recorded.

A governor who was observing the meeting offered an introduction to her safety manager to look at the violence in the community issues, and the vice principal accepted this offer.

One governor challenged around the issue of young people turning 18 and dropping out of children's services. The vice principal explained that the harmful sexualised behaviours panel is a very specific and targeted intervention for children. This is the second time that the college has had a student closed to this panel due to having turned 18, but the issues have not necessarily gone away. These young people then do not meet any threshold for adult services. The governor observer advised that Nottinghamshire County Council has an adult safeguarding board, but the vice principal informed the board that the threshold to qualify for this intervention is substantially higher than is required for young people.

One student governor raised a challenge in relation to the 34 instances of student-on-student sexual harassment. They asked whether there are categories that separate low-level and more serious incidents. The vice principal explained that the college works to national guidance on how it responds to concerns around sexual harassment and violence, and this ranges from very serious matters (e.g. rape) to lower-level issues (such as an inappropriate comment made as a one-off occurrence). At the level of significant sexual assault, the matter would automatically be referred to the police and social care. Matters such as inappropriate comments would require only an internal response.

Governors asked that their thanks be passed to the safeguarding and welfare teams as it is recognised that they have a difficult task.

AGREED:

- to note the content of the update provided
- to approve the new safeguarding and Prevent risk register, which will now be included in the college risk register as a replacement for the old Prevent tab.

Clerk

February
2024

8 PERFORMANCE REPORT – DATA ON A PAGE

The assistant principal: quality and standards introduced this item and particularly drew the committee's attention to the following data:

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Education programmes for young people

- Overall attendance is 85.3%, showing a decline from last period.
- Overall retention is 94.5% – again, a decline from last period.
- Overall progress scores have increased since last period to 0.00 but are lower than at the same point last year.
- Vocational attendance is 86.7%, a slight decline from last period but slightly higher than at this point last year.
- Vocational progress scores remain the same but show an improvement on this time last year.
- English attendance is 78.5%, a decline from last period but a significant improvement on this point last year.
- English progress scores remain the same as at the last period.
- Maths attendance is 79.7%, a slight decline from the last period but a slight increase from this point last year.
- Maths progress scores remain the same as at the last period but show a slight decrease from this point last year.

Adult learning programmes

- Direct delivery has an attendance percentage of 85.6%, a slight decline from last period but 1.7% higher than at the same point last year.
- Retention is 96.5%, a very slight decline from last period and lower than at this point last year.
- Progress scores remain the same.
- Subcontracted delivery has retention of 96.6%, an increase from the last period but slightly lower than at this point last year.
- Achievement is 65.4%, a significant decrease from both last period and this point last year.
- Community delivery retention is 87.7%, a decrease from both last period and this time last year.
- Achievement is 56.8%, a decrease from both this time last year and last period.

Apprenticeships – direct delivery

- Attendance is 87.2%, a slight decrease from last period but an improvement of 1.9% compared to this point last year.
- Retention is 70.6%, a decrease from last period but better than at this point last year.
- Achievement is the same as last period but is lower than at this point last year.
- Recording of 20% off-the-job training shows a decline to 18.7% from the last period, but this is an increase on last year.
- Recording of six hours' off-the-job training is 6.4%, which is a very slight decline from the last period.

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- Apprentices having had a review in the last three months has increased since last period to 88.9% which is an 11.9% improvement on the same point last year.

Learners with high needs

- Overall attendance is 86.3%, which is a decrease from last period but an improvement on this point last year.
- Overall retention has increased since the last period to 98.3%, which is a very minimal decrease from the same point last year.
- Progress scores remain the same as at the last period.
- Vocational attendance is 86.8%, which is a decrease since the last period.
- Vocational progress scores remain the same as at the last period.
- English attendance has improved since the last period to 85.3%.
- English progress scores remain the same as at last period but show an improvement from this point last year.
- Maths attendance is 85.2% which is a slight decrease from this point last year.
- Maths progress scores remain the same as at last period.

Free school meals

- Attendance shows a decline from the last period to 83.1%, but this is an improvement compared to the same point last year.
- Retention is 96.9%, which is a decline from last period but a very slight increase compared to last year.
- Progress scores have improved since last period.

BAME

- Attendance is 86.8%, a decline since the last period.
- Retention is 97.9%, a 1% decrease since the last period.
- Progress scores remain the same.

Deep dives meeting expectations (percentage grade 2 or better)

- College (direct delivery) classroom-based learning, apprenticeships, community and cross-college deep dives were 53.8% 'good' or better.
- Three deep dives were conducted within subcontracted provision, and all were graded 'good' or better.

The chair challenged the significant decline in adult learning programmes. The assistant principal: quality and standards is meeting regularly with the head of department and assistant principal of that area to discuss different qualifications that subcontractors want to push through. In terms of subcontracted achievements, the dip has been due to some adults leaving learning to go into the workforce in order to support their families. The vice principal advised that learner numbers

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within subcontracted provision are generally lower at this time of year, so this will have a further impact.

Community delivery has also taken a hit in relation to retention and achievement, and the vice principal explained that some courses have not taken place. However, other courses are planned so these numbers should improve. At this point, the vice principal is not worried about this data as it will have been reported pre-Christmas and community delivery does not normally get going properly until after this period. However, the vice principal and principal indicated that they will look at the measures as the figures look too different to the expectation.

Principal /
VP: C&Q
January
2024

One governor challenged the fact that the dashboard shows lots of decreased percentages since the last period, and she questioned which of these elements governors should be most worried about. A lot of the answers are presented within other reports, but this datasheet is presented with none of the explanation. The governor challenged that, if the purpose of the data report is to present a snapshot to governors, it is not meeting this requirement. The principal, vice principal: curriculum and quality, and the assistant principal: quality and standards will look at ways to make the dashboard more useful and easier to decipher.

Principal /
VP: C&Q /
AP: Q&S
March
2024

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

9 **RISK REPORT (RED RAG-RATED ITEMS)**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented the report, highlighting the following points:


Hard-to-fill vacancies

- Although challenges continue in engineering, this is improving, having reduced from 20 vacancies as a result of human resources (HR) working very hard to be creative in their approach in order to attract people. Managers have also been working closely with HR to improve recruitment, but leaders do not see this challenge ever going away completely.
- Two construction vacancies (air conditioning) have been out to advert for more than five months.
- The 'refer-a-friend' scheme has resulted in 22 employments, so this has clearly had an impact.

One governor questioned the agency spend, and it was clarified that the figure given as agency spend is gross. Further information was provided in relation to the fact that agency staff often cost around two and a half times more than a directly employed staff member.

Progress

- Vocational progress presents no concerns at the moment. The college has worked hard to ensure it is using national

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benchmarks to set target grades for technical qualifications and is using the ALPS methodology for non-technical qualifications and A Levels.

- Art and design progress scores show that students are more than one grade behind, but this is not a concern at the moment as students in this area have only completed one formative assessment so far, and it does take time to build knowledge and skill in this subject.
- Business is also more than a grade behind, but this area has had staffing challenges and now has a new head of department in place who is making a huge difference and has a keen focus on teaching to the top. This head of department is also taking on teaching hours to cover a vacancy, and it is hoped that improvement will be seen once this is no longer necessary.
- Esports progress scores – mainly at Level 2 – are more than one grade behind due to certain individuals. Interventions are in place, with monitoring being undertaken by the team and head of department. The academic staff governor informed governors that the first assignment was used for the progress check and, considering that these students came in without maths and English, the grades seen were actually very good.
- Most learners studying Functional Skills are on track.
- Learners are more than a grade behind in GCSE English, but the assessment at progress check 2 tested higher-level thinking skills and was the first time that this would have been revisited this academic year. Therefore, it was expected that learners would be a little behind, but there is a plan to constantly revisit this.
- Maths learners sat a paper for progress check 2, and the head of department was directed to be a little tougher this year so that targeted interventions could be put in place so as to improve grades.
- In A Levels, there are no concerns for Year 12, and Year 13 has improved. More details will be provided under the specific A Levels item.
- Learners in all three T-Level areas are performing well. Again, more information will be provided later on in the meeting.
- PMRs are providing challenge in areas where learners are behind, and managers are informed as to what these agendas will include so that they can come equipped with answers.

The chair indicated that it feels like a stronger start to the year in terms of the progress measures. He questioned whether there is anything which governors should be concerned about, particularly in A Levels. The vice principal indicated that ALPS scores are much better and extra work, investment and interventions have been put in place.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

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10 **PRIORITY LEARNERS DATA REPORT**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her report, and key matters highlighted were:

- There are some attendance issues among care leavers, those in supported housing, and learners on a child in need plan. The vice principal meets with support managers fortnightly and is now tracking the attendance of all vulnerable learners individually and, where there are concerns, chasing up with curriculum to support learners back into college. One student in supported housing has dropped to 39% attendance and, despite best efforts, is likely to withdraw.
- One young person in residential care is of particular concern and is well-known to the vice principal and the safeguarding manager. 'Team around the child' meetings are taking place to get this young person back into college. The student has been given an extended length of stay on-programme (two years) to reduce the pressure.
- The vice principal is meeting with the Nottinghamshire County Council deputy virtual head and the YMCA next week.
- Data for most priority groups is largely in line with, or slightly above, that of peers with notable exceptions: for example, young people closed to protection plans are somewhat behind their peers.

AGREED:

- to note the contents of the report

11 **A LEVELS**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented her detailed written report, and key matters highlighted were:

- Attendance for Year 13 is 88.6%, which falls just shy of the green RAG-rating but is better than the college average.
- Attendance for Year 12 is 92.9% – again, this is positive and does fall into the green RAG-rating.
- Year 13's residual score for progress check 2 is -1.08, but this is an improvement since progress check 1.
- Year 12's residual score is -0.65 which, given that this is a two-year programme, is not of concern. Where there are concerns, a number of interventions have been put in place. There is now more consistency with homework and some students are being offered additional study hours or 1:1 intervention. Focus has changed to learner voice, outcomes of learning goals, and marked work scrutiny. Extra resource also been put in place in the form of an interim manager. This person will support between now and the end of the academic year and will provide an opportunity for the head of sixth form to work with staff and improve teaching and learning.

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- Adaptations have been made for learners who are struggling with anxiety by the implementation of a quiet space.
- Staff have visited Loughborough College to share practice.
- An external consultant is continuing to work with the team in a coaching capacity.
- The principal delivered a positively received session covering ALPS training to teachers at Chesterfield Road, and it is thought that there is now buy-in in relation to this system.
- The deep dive outcome for the area was 'requires improvement', but it was still too early to see the impact of the improvements implemented. However, reports from student governors shows that staff are now much tougher and there is now much more of a requirement in terms of, for example, homework.
- A Level learners sat mocks in exam conditions last week, which were invigilated and JCQ-regulated. Progress check 3 will be an excellent indicator of where there are gaps and where further interventions are needed. The vice principal will be able to present more data around this at the next committee meeting.

(Spencer Moore left the meeting at 18:20)

The student governors, both A-Level students, were asked to give feedback on their experience so far. Feedback was as follows:

- The mock exams took place almost immediately after the Christmas break, and having this week off timetable felt like an extension of the break. Many students had possibly fallen behind over the break and were then taken aback by the mocks as they had not had chance to get back into the swing of college. The student warned that this might impact the results. The student suggested that it would have been better to have the mocks before Christmas, although it was noted that this would also come with challenges. Alternatively, the first week back could have been partially on-timetable but with some exams built in.
- The second student governor agreed with the points raised and informed governors that attending the exams left her feeling that she didn't know what to do with herself other than when revising. She also indicated that having the mocks before Christmas would have been better.
- Both the students have a piece of coursework due at the very end of January, and it was hard to set a timetable to complete this over Christmas while also trying to relax. The principal pointed out that many universities have exams the first week back after Christmas, and this is something the students might need to consider for their future. However, the comments raised will be taken on board.

One governor raised a question in relation to the homework journal, which was negatively raised by the student panel in December. The

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student governors reiterated that many of their peers find this too much like something that would be issued in secondary school, making them feel a little insulted. Although the motivation behind the journals is well-meaning, they are not being used by a majority of students. Teachers have also openly indicated that they feel the books take away their agency and the tasks which they are having to provide for students are redundant. Achievement coaches only check up on those students who are already known to be underperforming, and those students who are doing well are not checked; therefore, it is not thought that the implementation of this scheme has been effective. It is felt that the tasks set are 'fillers' rather than useful tasks for students to complete.

The principal informed the students and governors that there was a real need to up the ante on homework in order to improve grades. He advised that the usage of the books was intended to be optional, but this obviously hasn't got across. They were intended to help students to manage their homework, and he pointed out that the students have just reported that they struggled to timetable themselves during the Christmas break. He advised that students need to have valuable homework to complete, and teachers need to be coached where necessary to help them identify what valuable homework tasks entail.

One governor asked how study skills are covered within the college. The vice principal: curriculum and quality explained that this is done really well in some subjects, linked to target setting. In some areas, there is a disconnect between achievement coaches and teachers in relation to target setting. There is not a consistent approach, and this is in the QIAP for improvement, as is using exam techniques to drive performance.

Regarding homework, one student governor indicated that it would be better to have more guided, relevant tasks. The vice principal: curriculum and quality agreed to gather some specific feedback from students, subject by subject, around Easter. The academic staff governor feels that target setting also needs focus, and outcomes from this could then become the homework.

One governor raised a challenge around adaptive teaching. She indicated that many professional development opportunities have been listed in the QIAP, but it is not clear whether adaptive teaching is one of these. The vice principal clarified that this is part of the 'Teaching to the Top' initiative. There is more work to be done, particularly in A Levels and maths and English, but improvements can be seen. The vice principal clarified that this is about challenging those learners who are at the top: some learners need a lot of stretch; some are in the middle; others require more support or 'scaffolding'. All three of these groups require a different kind of input from staff, and it is not desirable for teaching to be aimed at the lower level and, therefore, fail to challenge the top-level students. In response, the governor challenged whether the college

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April
2024

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knows how well this is working as students have said time and time again that there is not enough adaptation. The vice principal indicated that there is more to do but the college is applying an individualised approach, with this work being driven by the assistant principal: quality and standards. Early investigations indicate that this is having impact and that it is working for learners with complex needs.

Governors questioned how much input a teacher would get in relation to training on adaptive teaching. It was explained that this is a bespoke offer for each area, decided via appraisals and self-assessment. The vice principal advised that differentiated CPD is a new approach, and it will take a full year to see whether it is effective. However, staff have embraced it. This point was confirmed by the academic staff governor indicated that it has been positive. The vice principal indicated that staff and learner voice are also monitored via the deep dive process, as is continuous professional development.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

12 **CURRICULUM REFORM**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality drew governors' attention to the report and indicated that:

- T levels are off to a good start and attendance, retention and progress are all positive.
- Students feel challenged and like the level of work, and teachers are enjoying the delivery.
- Childcare learners are out on placement.
- Some engineering learners went out on placement just before Christmas and others are planned for January or have interviews in place.
- There is one transition programme (foundation year) in early years. This is a small qualification and includes work experience and study skills with a focus on maths and English. The team has decided to remove the qualification from this for next year to focus incisively on employability, study skills and maths and English. The head of department is happy with the progress of this cohort and is confident that they are acquiring skills to move to the T Level.
- In 2024/25, the college will expand its T-Level offer to include T-Level Building Services Engineering for Construction; T-Level Onsite Construction; T-Level Management and Administration; T-Level Digital Production, Design and Development; T-Level Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing; T-Level Animal Care and Management; and T-Level Healthcare Science.
- The college is hoping to be able to run the digital T Level next year, albeit with a small cohort.
- Teams are working hard to get the courses ready for 2024/25.

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- The college intended to run a business and administration T Level, but this decision has not yet been made as the alternative offer is not yet being defunded.
- There was uncertainty around the media T Level as the pathways do not meet the usual destinations of the college's learners and the specification is not available, so staff have not had optimum time to plan. For now, it has been decided to keep things as they are in order to meet the needs for learners.
- At the moment, qualifications are being submitted for approval to IfATE. The college will not know what has been approved until May or June, for teaching the following academic year.
- It is felt that the college is 'ahead of the game'. Colleagues are attending a lot of events and are networking and sharing practice with other colleges, as well as generally keeping up to date with reforms.
- The second phase of curriculum planning took place this week and there were some very good debates and conversations.
- Employer boards are starting up and continuing so that the college can be informed of employers' requirements and to support with industry placements.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

13 **EDI (STUDENTS) EXCEPTIONS REPORT**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience referred to her detailed report, and key matters highlighted included:

- Section 2 highlights incidents year to date. Excluding sexual harassment and violence, only two of the other incidents would be considered significant. One incident particularly pointed out to governors was in relation to a student having been verbally abusive to a Muslim staff member. This matter is going through a disciplinary panel next week, and the vice principal is recommending exclusion.
- The vice principal has attached the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) report relating to students. Most data therein has come through the committee previously. Actual destinations data is still being finalised and will be brought to the next committee meeting.
- On 19th December 2023, the Department for Education launched a consultation around its proposed guidance in relation to gender-questioning children. Although having guidance is welcome, the approach taken is of concern to the college, particularly the need to discuss with parents regardless of the age of the child. Teenagers often do not want the college to contact their parents under any circumstances due to fear of negative reactions. The college will need to carry out stringent risk assessment and will need to provide training to teaching

Signed: _____  _____ Chair

Date: 28/03/2024

staff, as they are often the first in line for disclosure. The vice principal indicated that these concerns are shared across the sector.

Governors were in agreement that the proposal that colleges must have discussions with the parents of gender-questioning young people (rather than this condition only being in place for schools) is of concern and feedback should certainly be given that this is how the sector feels.

In terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty report, one governor asked for some mini case studies to be included in future reports to give examples of the college's work and the fact that it is more than compliant. The vice principal will include such case studies in future.

AGREED:

- to note the contents of the report
- to recommend the PSED report to the board for approval, on the understanding that actual destinations data is still to be added.

14 CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (CEIAG)

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her report, particularly highlighting the fact that the outcome of the Compass self-assessment tool has been received. This is used to assess how the college is doing against the Gatsby benchmarks forming the national careers strategy. The college scored 100% in respect of all elements bar one.

The principal challenged how rigorous this self-assessment was, and the vice principal expressed confidence that it was rigorous. However, it was confirmed that the careers link governor, who was present in the committee meeting, was not involved. A question was raised around the fact that the Careers Strategy was approved by governors but has not since been reviewed by them, and the vice principal indicated that this document is not annually reviewed. The governor challenged for this to come to the committee every year, and this was agreed.

Thanks were extended by the chair to the careers team for the piece of work in relation to the Compass self-assessment tool.

AGREED:

- to note the contents of the report
- that the Careers Strategy will come through the Standards Committee annually for review.

15 LEARNER VOICE REPORT (MONITORING)

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented this verbal item. Key matters to note were as follows:

- There was an 82% response rate to the survey.

VP: CESE

Ongoing

VP: CESE

Every
June

Signed: _____



_____ Chair

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- The most positive outcome is that improvement can be seen in relation to most questions.
- The college is largely in the upper 50% of benchmarked colleges.
- The college still scores within the lower benchmark for students being contacted if they are absent, but improvement has been made.
- The college is in the lower benchmark in relation to Prevent tutorials but, again, has made an improvement.
- The breakdown by directorate shows that Health, Education and Service Industries students are the most satisfied and Engineering students the least.
- The Rate Your Course survey had 1,400 responses, which is one of the highest rates seen. Students are largely satisfied.

Governors agreed that it is good to see that students feel safe and that the response rate to the surveys is very good. Overall, this was a good start to the academic year. However, governors observed that teachers starting sessions on time has dipped, and this needs to be monitored within the next survey to ensure it improves.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of additional business.

17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

This was confirmed as Thursday 28th March 2024 at 17:00.

Meeting closed at 19:10

Signed: _____  _____ Chair

Date: 28/03/2024