

**CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
QUALITY AND LEARNERS COMMITTEE
8 NOVEMBER 2016 – 2.00 pm**

PRESENT: Sarah Noble (Chair)
Andy Sparks (Principal)
Janet Maynard
Barbara Vohmann
Will Dean

IN ATTENDANCE: Penny Petch (Head of Teaching & Learning)
Caroline Williams (Deputy Principal)
Alison Davies (Director of Curriculum, Moulsham Street)
Marco Iciek (Director of Learner Development & Inclusion)
Mark Emerson (Director of Information Services)
Simon Drane (Director of Curriculum, Princes Road)
Rob Millea FCA (Clerk to the Corporation)
Joanne Harrington (Assistant Clerk)

491. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Steve Houghton, Elaine Oddie and Susan Hughes.

492. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Barbara Vohmann declared her interest as a staff member at Anglia Ruskin University. The Clerk declared his interest as Clerk to South Essex College. There were no other declarations made.

No confidential items were notified.

493. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed Will Dean (Student Governor) to his first meeting of the Committee and Will gave a brief overview of his course and his ambition post studies.

It was further reported that another student, Nathan Warren, is hoped to be able to attend future Meetings of the Committee as an Observer to give further insight into the Student Voice.

The Chair indicated that the main theme of the Meeting will be to review last year's Outcomes and to concentrate on the issues of significance relating to Level 2 provision.

494. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 MAY 2016

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 17 May 2016 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

495. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk provided a summary of Action Points from the last Meeting and current status.

The SPOC questionnaire will be uploaded onto the governors' portal immediately and current KPIs will also be uploaded once input received from all areas. In addition, the Principal confirmed that staff were looking into the format of uploaded documentation onto the portal to avoid large pdf files.

ACTION: CLERK

The Clerk was asked to ensure that training for Governors on Learning Walks to be included as the first item on the Agenda for the next Governors' Development Day on 3 February 2017, with Walks being carried out later in the Day.

ACTION: CLERK

496. PRESENTATION – ENGLISH & MATHEMATICS

Lisa Houghton (Curriculum Manager, English & Mathematics) gave an update presentation to the Committee focusing on further activity and progress in the delivery of English & mathematics, following on from the presentation given at the last Meeting and at the request of the Committee.

Progress

There were issues with teaching last year due to the need to use too many agency staff, who were often inadequate.

The SAR Intervention Plan remains the driving force for improvement and a consistency of approach with timetables and the delivery of the curriculum.

There are currently 1,000 live students, which is over 50% of the total 16-18 enrolled students, who have to do E or M or often both

Staffing has been stabilised – there are 11 in the team and they are working well together.

Key objectives this year

- Support arrangements for curriculum teams
- Improve the operational management especially Functional Skills
- Support the individual staff to improve their own performance
- Peer observations
- Support from external consultants
- Celebrate success

Outcomes

Last year, outcomes were very poor for Functional Skills. There is a big concern at Level 2, which was 29% down from previous year. Level 1 was a little better than previous year and this was the biggest cohort.

Overall, maths is performing better than English.

GCSE November resits have just been held with over 90% of students captured. Over 32% are looking at a C and a further 28% a high D. These figures are already up to last year's whole outcome for C and D.

Support is being improved for curriculum teams with a Linked Specialist Programme including training on the new 1-9 grades, instead of A* to G, in order to further embed maths & English.

This new GCSE system of grading was explained to the Committee and also the fact that expectations for English is to achieve a 4 which is far greater than a current C. Similarly, the maths content has increased significantly with greater focus on problem solving.

Attendance

This remains a significant challenge as attendance continues to be lower on English & maths compared to the other components of student study programmes.

Short Term Actions

Governors asked about prospects for this area and the emphasis is wholly on teaching and learning, which has to be consistent and imaginative. All mechanisms are directed towards this objective. There are regular progress and progression reviews of students and completion of formative assessment trackers. Managers are required to be closely supervising delivery and support is available for them in this task.

The guide to new GCSEs is available on line and Governors will be given the link.

It was noted that there is a better attitude of students this year to resitting maths & English. To improve attendance further, there is now the capacity for CAM teams to chase up students to ensure they attend classes.

A copy of Lisa's slides will be made available to the Committee and the teams efforts.

ACTION: CLERK

Lisa was **THANKED** by the Committee for her presentation and the team's efforts.

497. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Penny Petch (Head of Teaching & Learning) **PRESENTED** a Report providing the Committee with an overview of progress of Teaching, Learning & Assessment, concentrating on developments this term. This incorporated an Annual Report on Classroom Teaching Observations during 2015/16.

The Committee noted that the outcomes for last year had already been shared with Governors through the Self-Assessment Report at the Governors' Development Day on 21 October 2016.

The key points of the Report were:

- An explanation of the key challenges in 2015-16
- 52% of all observations undertaken this year are graded good or better when all 203 observations are taken into account
- 74% of optimised observations (when each person's best grade is considered) are graded good or better.
- Statistical analysis showing sector subject areas with optimised data above the College average of 74% and those below (6 above and 7 below). The SSAs with above average optimised data have significant numbers of students.
- The standard of teaching in Level 2 practical classes is better than in classroom based theory lessons
- Ten teachers were on historic Notice to Improve and six have been placed on the new ACE programme (Achieving College Excellence)
- 196 Learning Walks undertaken (excluding those done by Governors) – these were thematic usually related to findings from the Ofsted Inspection

A number of new recommendations for 2016-17 were listed to help further improve the quality of teaching & learning:

- New TLA Strategy
- Observations to be a developmental process
- Use of performance metrics from observation in the new performance review process
- Holistic grade for TLA by line manager at the end of the academic year
- AP surgeries and ACE training sessions regularly – APs are available on a drop in basis to give advice and support
- College wide mentors – eighteen have been designated and they are very successful to date, mainly in supporting their own teams but there is some cross College mentoring going on.
- CAM coaching programme
- Develop Programme Area Managers observational skills

Governors were concerned about the disparity between new staff and experienced staff as to good or better teaching reflected in observations. There is less staff turnover this year and it is hoped that all the 'poorer' staff have left.

A Governor commented that there was no specific Action Plan included in the Report. This will be brought to and be reported against at the next Meeting, including how the targets are working out and the Plan is being fulfilled.

ACTION: PP

A Governor asked which measures will have the greatest effect. Nothing on its own as it is a holistic approach, would emphasize the first five recommendations listed in PP's paper coupled with closer involvement of the CAMs.

The Deputy Principal commented that the reconfigured staffrooms has helped with morale in individual teams.

A Governor asked about mentors in each area and were informed that there are not mentors in all areas but APs are on hand to assist (as noted above).

It was commented that, during the interview process for potential new teachers, it is more productive to include a full class of students when the potential teacher carries out a micro teach.

Governors asked - What is the biggest challenge for staff? Penny said that there is obviously a lack of experience for new CAMs in some areas and there is a continual need for staff to acquire new and further skills through additional training (e.g. new GCSE syllabus).

In this regard, identification of training needs is important and it was encouraging as to the positive feedback and the wholehearted participation in the most recent Professional Development Weeks (January and July 2016).

New staff are underperforming in areas of pedagogy that are fundamental to the role of the teacher and not in relation to the systems and processes in the College.

The Committee **NOTED** the Report.

498. REPORT ON CLASSROOM AND TEACHING INTERVENTIONS PLAN

The Deputy Principal **PRESENTED** a Report on the College's progress in areas of intervention and proposals for new areas of intervention for discussion and comment.

The SAR process had identified five areas of concern:

- GCSE English & maths – see earlier Report
- Health and Social Care – the impact was significant and it continues to improve
- Art, Design and Media – the impact was significant and it is still on an improving trend
- Sport – considerable impact and now out of intervention
- Electrical Installation and Engineering – signs of improvement but not reflected in last year's success rates

A good deal of progress has been made in English & maths, Sport and Health and Social Care as noted above. The other two areas will be subject to a second year of intervention and three new areas will be added as part of the drive by the College for rapid improvement:

- Public services
- Childcare
- Functional Skills

To address the issues at Level 2 identified in College, a Cross-College intervention project will be implemented for all ages in this regard.

The Report explained the nature of the interventions which took place in the year and that they were successful (with a note of the outcomes in each area), resulting in improvements for learners' outcomes but it is recognised that this constitutes a platform for future progress.

The Report also noted the general outcomes of the interventions across the curriculum areas, e.g. sharing good practice, action planning and monitoring of progress, less than capable teachers leaving, good challenge of current practice, common assessment planning and tracking.

The Student Governor commented that there was bunching of assignments during the year just ended which was ineffective and did drive some students away due to the inconsistent workload. Those that remained nevertheless did achieve.

Governors asked as to how are we going to pull together our efforts in intervention at Level 2 and if there is a danger that there could be diffusion between curriculum areas.

The Deputy Principal believes that is under control, the problems are fully understood, in that the psychology of Level 2 learners known, the profile of Level 2 with staff is clear and that it is ensured that course selection for students is appropriate.

There is no question that this is an enormous challenge but the commitment is there and the monitoring is established, including at SMT level.

Governors asked for an update on Intervention measures in the nominated areas and progress made at the next Meeting on 7 February 2017, including input from Curriculum Area Managers.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the Report and **ENDORSED** the approach planned for this academic year.

ACTION: CW

499. SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2015/16

All Governors on the Board has been provided with the second Version of the Self-Assessment Report for the College for 2015/16 at the Governors' Development Day on 21 October.

The Committee, having reviewed the revised version of the Report, **RECOMMENDED** that the Report be approved by the Board at its Meeting on 9 December 2016 for submission to the SFA.

The Committee noted that the Report has been submitted to the Area Review Team as part of the dataset in connection with that process.

ACTION: CLERK

500. COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016/17

As with the SAR (minute 498 above), the Plan had been provided to all Board Members on 21 October.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the Report and **RECOMMENDED** it be approved by the Board at its Meeting on 9 December 2016.

ACTION: CLERK

Governors had scrutinised the Plan in detail on 21 October and this is documented in the Report on the Governors' Development Day.

The Deputy Principal reinforced the structure of the Plan and the seven priorities noted in the Plan, as follows:

- Accountability of managers/high expectations
- Robust target setting and action planning leading to rapid and consistent improvement
- Improve governors' oversight of the College's educational activity
- Improve progress for students especially in English & maths and at Level 2
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment within 16-18 study programmes
- Improve teaching of English & maths
- Raise standards within classroom based learning

Progress against the Plan will be monitored by this Committee on an on-going basis at each Meeting of the Committee and also to the Board. The Committee asked that the Plan be RAG-rated for the approval at Board in December.

ACTION: CW

501. CURRICULUM PLAN 2016-17

The Deputy Principal **PRESENTED** the Curriculum Plan 2016-17 for consideration and review by the Committee.

The Plan explained the Curriculum Vision of the College and highlighted the seven Essex priority sectors plus stakeholder and partner ambitions. The local context was therefore stressed in the offer to students.

The Plan shows the College continuing to offer a broad based curriculum across 14 of the 15 sector subject area at levels entry to level 3. The Plan

outlined the areas of new provision this year and future plans under consideration. As previously, the Plan focused considerably on the College's success in providing courses and training for learners with High Needs.

The Plan identified the seven principles which underwrite the Plan:

- Broad based curriculum (entry level to level 4)
- English & maths provision (and improvement)
- Work experience
- Expand Apprenticeship offer
- Support the Local Authority regarding High Needs learners
- Greater efficiency in delivery
- Not running courses which do not meet achievement thresholds and/or do not provide good value for money

The Plan also explained the partnerships which the College has with other educational institutions, local authorities and local employers.

The Committee were made aware of the College's ongoing response to local needs whereby Course Directors can approve changes to the course file mid-year.

A copy of this Plan in draft was provided to the Area Review Team as part of the evidence base for the Area Review.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Plan be approved by the Board at its Meeting on 9 December 2016.

ACTION: CLERK

502. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2015/16

The Director of Learner Development & Inclusion **PRESENTED** this Report to the Committee for consideration and comment. It is an annual requirement of the College Safeguarding Policy.

There was a **high degree of compliance** in the College's safeguarding arrangements as evidenced by two safeguarding quality audits during the year (Ofsted, November 2015 and Essex Schools and Colleges Safeguarding Board, June 2016).

There was a significant rise in the number of general safeguarding issues during the year due to improved awareness of such issues among staff and students and the full introduction of the new electronic reporting system (which has made it easier to make reports).

The Report explained the referrals made in the year (244), either to the safeguarding lead officer (128) or dealt with in curriculum teams (116). As a consequence, 29 referrals were made to external agencies for action and follow up.

The Committee noted that Susan Hughes is the designated Governor for Safeguarding matters. She attends relevant meetings in the College and attended all such meetings (seven in all) during 2015/16.

The Committee noted that there are no actions outstanding from the Safeguarding Action Plan and a list of key achievements in the year was included in the Report.

We are up to date with specified training for designated staff and general training for all other staff. An Action Plan is in place and is being continually monitored. All staff receive a newsletter five or six times a year. The Committee observed that mental health issues are growing in importance not only within the College but in the wider education world.

A governor asked whether there was a gender balance in the Safeguarding staff so that students can approach either. There is a balance and this does not seem to be an issue based on referrals/enquiries coming from students.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Board approve this Report at its Meeting on 9 December 2016.

ACTION: CLERK

503. ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS 2015-16

The Director of Learner Development & Inclusion presented an Analysis of the above for last academic year for consideration by the Committee.

A total of 36 formal complaints had been received and all had been satisfactorily concluded within the time scale set out in the College Policy for handling Complaints. One complaint had been escalated to the SFA for further review and a copy of the letter discharging the matter from the SFA was provided to the Committee for information with names redacted.

The majority of complaints related to timetabling and staffing issues (English & maths) and course organisation. The management restructure last year has clearly improved matters in this regard.

A small number of compliments had been received by the College covering:

- Student representation of the College at an external event
- Excellent support for students
- Outstanding commitment by teaching staff
- Being highly responsive to issues

The Committee **RECEIVED** the Report.

504. STUDENT SURVEY

The Director of Learner Development and Inclusion **PRESENTED** this Report on student opinion, Student Perception of Course (SPOC) for 2015/16.

The overall level of student satisfaction across the College is 68% which is 9% down on last year. It is not clear what the National Average is but may be around 75%. It is acknowledged that there is more work to do to try and raise participation rates from students but it is recognised that there is a degree of survey overload.

The satisfaction levels were higher for male learners than female (72% against 62%) – the male cohort was 1082 learners and the female cohort 739. In addition, the satisfaction level amongst high needs learners was 83%, well above the overall College average. A similar position exists for part time learners.

The Paper provided satisfaction levels by each Sector Subject Area, noting which were above the College average and which were below. The College is strong in construction and the build environment (438 learners) and the satisfaction rate reflected this at 79%.

The poorest areas were ICT, Health, public services and care and Business administration and law, where the satisfaction was only 50%.

These concerns very much related to Level 2 which mirrors other issues at that Level.

The Paper outlined a number of actions planned to improve satisfaction of students and the Committee endorsed these. The Committee noted that the College Improvement Plan reflects issues raised in the survey and that there are further steps in place to engage even further with the Learner Voice Group.

Interim reporting of student satisfaction is to be considered.

The suggestion was made that Governors meet with some groups of students at the next Governors' Development Day during their tutorials

on that day or for a sandwich lunch as a further way of hearing the Student Voice and in a less formal context.

The Committee **RECEIVED** the Report.

505. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2016-17 AND RISK REGISTER

The Committee **RECEIVED** a regular Report from the Director of information Services (KPIs) and the Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk (Risk Register).

KPIs

The Academic Targets outlined in the paper for 2016/17 were **AGREED** by the Committee, but the Committee noted that the first set of data for this year is very early in the year but the signs are good, notwithstanding the fact that attendance at English & maths remains challenging.

The Committee will review progress through the year.

Risk Register

The Committee **RECEIVED** the latest Risk Register for the College and **NOTED** the following key risks for monitoring by this Committee:

- Continued improvement in maths & English
- Intervention projects produce rapid improvement
- Cross College initiatives at Level 2 leading to improved outcomes for learners
- Student tracking through progress reviews and intervention
- Work Experience

It was noted that the College is developing a specific risk dashboard for Curriculum Areas and the Committee reviewed a preliminary Draft. This dashboard will enable a snapshot of issues faced by individual curriculum managers and for them to take action (and explain that action) to mitigate each risk. The key RED risk at present (see 2015/16 SAR) is Level 2 provision on both 16-19 study programmes and adult learning.

The Committee **ENDORSED** the Risk methodology and actions being proposed in respect of curriculum areas. The agreed targets for the year will be provided to the Board at their Meeting on 9 December and their agreement sought.

ACTION: CLERK

506. COMMITTEE MATTERS

The Clerk **PRESENTED** a Report on Committee Matters, which was considered by the Committee, covering a Review of Compliance by the Committee with its own Terms of Reference during 2015-16 and Committee Self-Assessment for 2015-16.

The average grade awarded by the five Members of the Committee responding was 1.9, just above Good. Members raised a number of issues in connection with training, transparency in data, greater challenge by the Committee and the like. These points will be monitored during the year.

In particular, the Committee will continue with presentations at Committee Meetings on Curriculum Areas and ensure strong curriculum and learners' content at Governors' Development Days.

The Committee also **RECEIVED** a Paper detailing compliance by the Committee against its own Terms of Reference for the 2015/16 year. The Committee was invited to **REVIEW** its Terms of Reference and to consider any changes required. The Committee considered none were required.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Terms of Reference be approved by the Board at its Meeting on 9 December 2016.

ACTION: CLERK

507. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no matters of AOB.

508. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 7 February 2017 at 2 pm.

Tuesday 16 May 2017 at 2 pm.

There being no further business, the Meeting terminated at 5.05 pm.

Signed.....Date.....