



Mission Statement: *Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures*

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS BOARD OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Date: Tuesday 9th May 2023
Venue: The Blackpool Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 5.15-7:50pm

Present: Ms Debbie Taaffe (Chair)
 Ms Jill Gray (Principal)
 Cllr Callum Baxter
 Cllr Don Clapham
 Ms Caroline Coyne
 Mr David Gascoigne
 Mr Jeremy Mannino
 Ms Sukie Woodhouse
 Ms Nina Karanasekara
 Ms Kirsten Burnett
 Mr Stephen Cooke
 Mr Alistair Burr
 Mr Nick Andrews
 Mr Kellen Collumbine

Together with: Ms Gail Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
 Ms Tina Cooper (Vice Principal: Vocational)
 Ms Amanda Crumblehulme (Assistant Principal: Business Support)
 Mr Stuart Ormson (Assistant Principal: Student Support)
 Ms Sam Brown (Assistant Principal)
 Ms Jane-Leigh Mannino (presenter)
 Mrs Sue Hawitt (Governance Administrator-FCAT-Minute Taker)

Apologies: Ms Tabitha Davey

		Action
73.2023	Preliminaries The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Stephen Cooke, the new non-executive director, everyone introduced themselves. The Chair also welcome Jane-Leigh Mannino who had agreed to deliver some safeguarding CPD to directors.	
74.2023	Directors CPD- Safeguarding presented by Jane-Leigh Mannino The Designated Safeguarding Lead from St Mary's Catholic Academy delivered a training session on safeguarding focussing on the complexity of trauma specific to the Blackpool area. She shared some comparison data from across the North West and England to give directors a detailed insight into what is happening in Blackpool. Directors were given some background information to the 'Blackpool Better Start' programme which is being rolled out to professionals across the locality. She also shared some strategies being used locally to support young people and their families. Directors were given an opportunity to ask questions. Questions from Directors	

In response to a question about directors' obligation to report any issues, it was noted that every agency uses the 'common assessment framework' the framework aims to streamline the process of helping at-risk children by allowing multiple agencies to communicate and work together as a team. In the first instance directors would refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the college.

Directors noted that there seems to be a higher level of deep rooted traumas coming into the workplace. It was explained that due to the work carried out over previous years, more people are willing to share their experiences, as a result figures are higher with more pressure on mental health services.

Directors noted all staff in all areas of the workplace would benefit from training, giving them the skills to help them deal with every day issues.

The Chair thanked Jane-Leigh for her presentation and she left the meeting.

75.2023 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

76.2023 Consideration of any items of urgent business.

There were no items of urgent business to discuss

77.2023 Confirmation of Quoracy

It was noted the meeting was quorate

78.2023 Minutes of the meeting for approval

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2023 were approved

The minutes of the extra ordinary meeting held on 23rd January 2023 were approved

79.2023 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

a) Staff Survey Report –(Item 66.2022 from the previous minutes)

directors asked for more specific communication feedback from the staff survey report 'you said we did' the Assistant Principal: Business Support shared a document with directors highlighting the summary of actions taken so far which had been well received by staff.

b) Teaching, Learning and Assessment-Achievement Rates Report-(Item 68.2022 from the previous minutes) Further detailed analysis will be undertaken and reported to directors- the Deputy Principal informed directors that there are some issues with the layout of the report which will be looked into in more detail.

-Teaching, Learning Assessment- In-Year Alps report (item 68.2022 from the previous minutes) confirmation directors will receive interim updates between meetings. It was noted that interim updates may not be needed with the new report format.

-Teaching, Learning and Assessment, confirmation students were informed of the reason why MOCK exams cannot be held in January- it was confirmed this will be reported to students at the start of the new academic year

80.2023 Retention update presented by Stuart Ormson (Assistant Principal: Student Support)

Directors were given a brief update on how retention is calculated and how it effects college funding. Directors were invited to ask questions

Questions from Directors

Asked how much funding is received if a student leaves just before sitting the exam at the end of two years, it was noted that college would receive full funding for the first year and 50% funding for the second year.

It was noted that reports do not include a two-year retention figure which may be of interest to directors who only receive retention figures that impact on funding. It was noted that the reports spotlight the progression between Route 3 → L6 and L6 → U6

A discussion took place about leavers between Lower 6 and Upper 6 and what is being done to encourage students to stay at the college, it was noted that staff work extremely hard to support students in their choices, giving them positive messages from the onset and analysing any leaver questionnaires to ensure nothing has been missed should they then decide to leave.

In response to a question about students leaving without staff knowing (i.e. just not showing up) it was noted these are very minimal.

Directors were informed that the BRAG process which identifies students at risk of failing or dropping out of college had been brought forward to ensure students are supported by staff to make the right decision at the most critical time.

Directors asked how much pressure is linked to financial implications, it was noted that staff support the students in their choices focussing on students' happiness, safety and success for the future not on the financial implication for the college. If students are not engaging with the programme, it can have a negative impact on college culture and undermine the quality.

In response to a question about the balance between how much absence a student can have and still be encouraged to sit the exam, it was noted that discussions would be individual to the student circumstances, however there is a disciplinary process which would include a meeting to review the students' college place, students who are not engaging or attending are likely to have their place withdrawn.

Directors asked if the BRAG process has links with local feeder schools, it was noted that some additional information from schools can be useful to strengthen individual transition but quite often students engage differently once in the college environment.

In response to a question about the cut-off date for year one retention, it was noted that this is the 30th June.

81.2023

Attendance and Retention

Directors received the Attendance and Retention report (paper 9.1) presented by the Assistant Principal: Student Support and were invited to ask questions

Questions from Directors

Asked about point 6.8 of the report and how many students are at risk of non-attendance, it was noted that the exact figure is not yet known but strategies have been based on the number of leavers from the previous year to ensure fewer future leavers.

The Assistant Principal: Student Services gave directors the retention figures to date compared to the same point last year which currently stand at;

Route3 84.1% up 6.4pp

L6 92.9% up 3.9pp

U6 97.5% up 1.33pp

Current attendance is about the same as the same point last year

Route3 79.7%

L6 93.3%

U6 91.6%

It was noted that across the education sector attendance, expectations and standards are very different to pre-pandemic in terms of trauma and lived experiences, staff at college are working hard to give students positive experiences to encourage them to stay at college.

Directors were pleased with the strategies being used to prevent students leaving and the progress being made.

In response to a question about taking on more students, it was noted that the capacity is not capped in anyway but with increasing competition and more students going into apprenticeships the numbers of students have decreased. Directors noted that the report is pleasing with early leavers down and student retention up across the college, however concerning is the caseload numbers for Pastoral Mentors given the increase in student mental health. It was noted that to expand the number of pastoral mentors would take additional funding which just is not available at present, however this issue has been raised with the ESFA.

Directors suggested perhaps using A level students as volunteers as peer mentoring or mental health buddies.

82.2023

Teaching Learning and Assessment

Directors received the new style in-year ALPS report (paper 10.1) presented by the Deputy Principal who invited questions

Questions from Directors

Directors asked about some subjects with a lower score than the previous year, it was noted that the table in the report shows ALPS grades for progress at a given point in the year, (not the final score) it was also noted that students are receiving additional support such as, academic tutorials, on the spot exam practice and incentive revision.

In response to a question the Deputy Principal explained the processes used to collect data throughout the year and noted that at the moment due to centre assessed grades (CAGs) and teacher assessed grades (TAGs) it is hard to achieve an accurate like for like comparison, due to the disruption caused by the pandemic.

Asked if ALPS is still the best tool for measuring student progress, it was noted that at present there is no level 3 value added tool available due to the pandemic, however every college in the country has their data submitted to ALPS by the government so it is the best measure currently.

In response to a question, directors were informed that there were no surprises in the data presented and were asked for feedback on the new format of the report.

Asked if there is an option for students to access pre recorded materials if sessions were missed, due to external issues such as strike days it was noted that this would be something to consider for the future.

A note sent after the meeting for directors reflected the following;

The teacher set appropriate work for students to complete and she also provided additional work which she shared with instructions:

'if you have finished the other work set, here's an optional workbook that you can choose to work through to aid your revision (it's the official revision guide from Napier).'

Whilst the students may not have seen it before it was not the only work set, indeed it was additional and supportive. I think this was appropriate.

SLT left the meeting

83.2023

Directors Self-Assessment

Directors received and approved the self-assessment report and the Quality Improvement Plan (DQIP) (paper 11.1). Directors agreed to visit at least one department per year and one event and were asked to book these through the Clerk

Directors

Directors considered the draft training plan (paper 11.2) which included mandatory and optional training sessions and were asked to consider any other training they may require to support them in their role as director. It was noted future training for directors will be delivered in a variety of ways to try to relieve pressures on full board meetings and give sufficient time to each agenda item.

84.2023

Identification of any new or amended risks

No new risks were identified

Date and Time of next meeting

Tuesday 19th September 2023 at 5:15pm

Signed _____

Date _____