



**WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on Wednesday 28th June 2023

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Angela Newton-Soanes, chair
Ben Owen (until 4.30pm)
Andrew Cropley
Andrew Spencer
Spencer Moore

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Director of Governance
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience
Diane Booth, Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality
Phil Clark, Assistant Principal: Construction
Nikki Slack, Assistant Principal: Health, Education and Service Industries (until 4.30pm)
Sarah Morley, Head of Department: Sport and Public Services
Kirsty Walsh, Assistant Principal: Engineering

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from David Gillies, John Winfield and Kate Truscott. Sarah Morley and Kirsty Walsh were welcomed to their first meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH MAY 2023

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 9th May 2023.

There were no matters arising.

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

Signed : _____ *Angela Newton-Soanes* _____ Chair

Date: 09/10/2023

4 **ACTION PROGRESS REPORT**

The committee were happy to note the content of the update provided.

5 **BALANCE SCORECARD ITEMS AND ANNUAL KPIS 2022/23**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality introduced this item, and key matters highlighted were:

- Current attendance for GCSE is 76.74%, which is very low. This has led to radical reforms to Level 1 provision. The college will be doing more Functional Skills, and the hope is that this will engage learners more. The college is taking a balanced approach to Level 2 learners and individually assessing whether GCSEs or Functional Skills are the best option for them.
- Attendance at GCSE exams was good at just under 90%. Attendance was 89.9% for paper 1 and 88.9% for paper 2.
- The college is hoping to improve on prior year achievement; however, the residual score at progress check 5 was a decline. Therefore, this may mean that results are comparable with last year.

A question from one member of the committee was whether or not Functional Skills tutors will link in with vocational tutors so that what is taught can be applied. Staff confirmed that this is the case; staff are creating a separate scheme of work for the 16-18 curriculum, and it will have much more contextualisation. Staff explained that Functional Skills includes on-demand assessments, which means that students can complete when they are ready and gives the college longer in the year to finish as well. Governors asked whether additional classes will be offered at yearend. Staff confirmed that they will and that information obtained at progress check 5 will be used to put in additional interventions for those who are struggling.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

6 **QIAP**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality drew governors' attention to the full document and then provided a deep dive on two aspects. These were:

- Retention
 - Rates show positive performance; however, there are some study programme learners who are not attending well enough.
 - There are risks in relation to building services and construction. Low retention is a risk; however, staff are confident that the risks regarding not achieving are low.
- Teaching and learning

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- The strategy in place is underpinned by coaching, support and mentoring.
- Continuous professional development is in place.
- Teaching to the top practitioners are used across the college.
- 30 deep dives have been completed, including with subcontractors.
- These have shown that 84.2% of teaching is good or better.
- This puts the college in a good place to move forward.

The committee discussed low attendance and asked whether the college knows why this is. Staff provided assurance that this is known and that comprehensive reviews are completed during the PMRs. Known reasons for absence include anxiety, mental health, and illness. Staff look at attendance in all of the progress checks, alongside retention. There is confidence regarding the level of scrutiny in relation to this.

In relation to the percentage of teaching and learning which is good or better, the committee acknowledged that this is a really positive achievement and, therefore, passed on their congratulations. The committee acknowledged that there has been a culture change within the organisation and that it is really clear to see the positive impact following training and development investment.

The vice principal indicated that an increasing number of students now have to take external assessments, and there are risks in relation to resit achievement; however, assurance was given that all are supported.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

7 REFLECTIONS ON THE OFSTED REPORT

The vice principal: curriculum and quality introduced this item, and all acknowledged that the college is delighted with the outcome and that the findings are good for the community, employers, learners and staff. It should mean that the college will now not be inspected again for five years, which gives the organisation time to develop and grow. It gives the organisation space to look at doing things differently. A challenge from one member of the committee was to look at positive risk-taking. Staff provided assurance that this is already taking place, and examples given were planning CPD from a bottom-up approach and streamlining some of the systems in place. It should now give staff the time to do more to develop partnerships.

CEO indicated that, from his perspective, it was pleasing and reassuring that the inspection didn't tell the college anything that it didn't already know. He indicated that student support services came across as really strong within the report, and now there is space to look at doing things slightly differently. The vice principal gave an example of every learner

Signed : _____ *Angela Newton-Saunders* _____ Chair Date: 09/10/2023

having a 'preparing for adulthood' target, not just those falling within the high needs bracket. All agreed that this would really set them up for life and not just employment. Staff described this as an opportunity to 'kick things on'. This, if progressed, would build independence and resilience for every student.

In relation to the aspects identified as requiring improvement, it was acknowledged that the four aspects were already included within the QIP or the risk register. The committee all agreed that the college now has an opportunity to focus on other things rather than preparing for Ofsted. In terms of the content of the report, governors felt that it captured the ethos of the college and also what it is doing for the community. A challenge from the committee was not to be complacent and to make sure that the organisation still moves forward.

(Spencer Moore joined the meeting at 3.25pm)

Staff acknowledged that the landscape and expectations change and, therefore, it is important to keep moving forward. Governors all agreed that it was really pleasing to see the acknowledgement in relation to the quality of high needs provision. How the college treats the most vulnerable is a reflection of the whole community.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

8 LSIP AND LSIF

The vice principal introduced this item, and key matters highlighted were:

- Board has already discussed the emerging themes in detail.
- The LSIP was published in May 2023.
- This is the same time as the college submitted its community pledge.
- The LSIP priorities are broad enough that they give the college flexibility.
- In relation to the LSIF, all D2N2 colleges have got together to put in a bid.
- Funding runs over two years. It starts in 2023/24 so, realistically, an October 2023 start.
- It is mainly capital funding and not revenue.
- 20th June 2023 was the deadline date for submission of an expression of interest.
- An expression of interest has been submitted in relation to three projects, which are:
 - 1) Creation of net zero hubs. For WNC, this will primarily be automation and robotics. For other organisations, it will include low carbon and logistics.

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- 2) Digital skills – this is essential skills right through to the more specialist. The group has started to map a careers structure/pathway across several years which is not apprenticeships. One of the focuses is a ‘grow your own’ approach with employers.
- 3) Transferrable essential employability skills – RNN college is leading on this.

The vice principal then referred back to the discussions at the most recent strategy review day and reminded that the challenge from the board was to transfer the organisations values into behaviours, which would lead to a values-based curriculum. It is also clear that colleges need to do a lot more work with employers to communicate the ‘art of the possible’. They currently simply don’t know what FE colleges can do for them. It is now important to get the message out and across. One suggestion to do this is speed dating at the Mansfield 2020 meetings so that college staff can participate and say what the college does. All agreed that development of a values-based curriculum would very much align with the preparing for adulthood targets, objectives and skills.

A challenge from one governor was whether, as the LSIPs are all saying the same thing, there is a risk in creating something bespoke for our locality. He queried whether there was likely to be any national policy applied to this. The CEO expressed the view that this was unlikely as there are different challenges in different parts of the country. His view is that this is an opportunity to create something great here and then share it more widely, and an example given was the learning companies. A challenge from governors was a need to avoid a ‘postcode lottery’ in relation to the quality of transferrable skills offer. The CEO indicated that this may be something on which to challenge the AoC and potentially use positive partnerships here at the college at the AoC conference, with partners singing the praise of the approach taken by WNC. A suggestion from one governor was to create a talking heads piece as a marketing tool for the AoC conference in November. This would be an opportunity to share what the college is doing really well.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

9 PERFORMANCE REPORT – DATA ON A PAGE 2022/23

Key matters highlighted were:

- Data is now provided on two tabs so that the prior year comparison is also provided in advance of the meeting.
- For young people
 - attendance is lower nationally
 - it is discussed at all PMRs and all departments have plans in place to improve
 - retention has improved

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- in relation to progress scores, there is still room for improvement.
- In relation to adults
 - where there are red RAG-rated items, there isn't a significant difference
 - 158 continuing learners still to achieve
 - 645 continuing in Community.
- In relation to apprenticeship provision
 - retention is lower, but the national rate fell significantly – It was 57.7% but is now 53.4%
 - 194 continuing apprentices
 - a number of apprentices are past the planned end date; focus is on EPA preparation
 - some staffing challenges in some areas.
- In relation to high needs
 - attendance is slightly lower
 - attendance is the same for vocational and English
 - free school meals is showing a dip in progress scores; however, some students are doing resits and resubmissions, which means that the position may improve.
- Teaching and learning
 - There is only one more subcontractor who needs to participate in a deep dive, and this is planned for July 2023.
 - There is just one subcontractor who was found to be 'requires improvement'. A lot of work has been done with them to improve.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

10 APPRENTICESHIP REPORT

The vice principal introduced this item, and key matters highlighted were:

- There are 1,020 apprentices in total.
- The college offers over 71 different standards.
- There are now only two on frameworks.
- The overall retention rate is 66.4%, which is 5.6% above national.
- The college is well above national rates in all areas except health and social care.
- In relation to the accountability measures, the 'past end date' position has slipped into 'requires improvement' at R09 (April). Assurance was given that the senior team now monitors every single learner on a weekly basis and, therefore, there is confidence regarding robust tracking. The rollovers are also monitored to ensure that robust decisions are made. Most of the learners are just being prepped for EPA or are awaiting an EPA outcome. There are some learners at risk in health and social care.

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- The EPA pass rate is slightly lower than national.
- 43.1% high grade achievement. The college does not know the national achievement rates for each standard and, therefore, can't really analyse.

The committee all agreed that it was clear to see that the measures put in place are having an impact. All agreed that more consistency across the standards would be helpful and beneficial.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

11 **RISK REPORT**

The vice principal introduced this item and specifically drew the committee's attention to the risk in relation to hard-to-fill vacancies, particularly teachers in a number of areas. These include:

- maths and English
- A Levels
- engineering and construction, particularly plumbing and rail maintenance – a review of engineering and construction has shown that 82 agency staff were engaged over a two-year period.

This was described as a national issue and, to try to address it, the college has deployed a number of approaches to try to minimise risks. Examples given were growing our own, succession planning, and internal promotion. Staff advised that there have been successes, particularly in relation to the maths and English teams. A challenge from the committee was to continue to keep thinking outside of the box and to continue to develop career pathways as these will be attractive.

One governor asked whether it will become a bigger challenge to respond to the local skills agenda. Staff indicated that it will, particularly in some T-Level areas, and an example given was the content of the health and social care T-Level curriculum. Staff reminded that there are two LSIP priorities which will be a challenge. The first is net zero, with colleges not yet fully understanding or having skills in place to teach. In relation to digital, and particularly the specialist end of the spectrum, it is not possible for colleges to compete with the salaries available in industry. Staff expressed a view that there will be slightly different challenges on different themes. All agreed that all the college can do is continue to be creative. Staff advised that, currently, motor vehicle is the most significant recruitment challenge.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

12 **PRIORITY LEARNERS – DATA REPORT**

Signed : _____ *Angela Newton - Sans* _____ Chair Date: 09/10/2023

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

- Yellow highlights within the report show where the priority group gaps are.
- The college is on track to close the gap for BAME and free school meals students. They are ahead of their peers in relation to progress scores.
- The college has had less success regarding care experienced young people and children in need. Care experienced, specifically in residential care, is showing a significant gap. That said, the college is moving in the right direction but will not close the gap.

The committee acknowledged that the small steps are what is important. The vice principal indicated that she and the team are focusing some of their efforts with the other professionals supporting students who are in residential care. Staff within the residential care setting need to behave in the same way as a parent would and get students up and in to college.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

13 E&D (STUDENTS) – EXCEPTIONS REPORT

The vice principal referred to her detailed report, and key matters highlighted included:

- 15 homophobic bullying incidents, which is two up on the previous report.
- 29 incidents of racial bullying, which is one up on the previous report.
- Issues seen are more to do with online activity and behaviours rather than face-to-face and, because of this, the college will have a focus on online behaviours next year.
- 55 child-on-child sexual harassment and violence incidents.
- 54 external sexual harassment and violence incidents.
- The number of sexual harassment and violence reports has almost doubled; however, it is not a significant concern as the college has done a lot of work to raise awareness and has encouraged reporting.
- No change in relation to disability harassment.
- The college is on track to close gaps in some areas but not all.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

14 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT

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

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- 2,500 separate incidents reported on CPOMS, which is slightly down on the prior year; however, the number of external referrals is the same.
- Prevent referrals have doubled this year.
- At yearend, there will be 11 students on a child in need plan.
- There are three open child protection concerns, with nine having been closed in the year.
- Currently, there are 50 care experienced learners. This is likely to increase to between 55 and 60 next year.
- There have been nine sexual exploitation incidents, which is the same as last year.
- There have been seven child criminal exploitation concerns.
- Mental health is still the most significant area of concern.
- In relation to transition, there are 359 students open on CPOMS with some vulnerabilities. 11 of these pose significant risk, with two involving multi-agency support and who are currently in a secure facility for their own safety.
- There have been no partner provider concerns since the last report.

The committee were advised that the 2023 update to Keeping Children Safe in Education has now been published. She drew the committee's attention to appendix 1, which is the proposed policy for next year. She explained that there are some small changes but that they will have an impact on behaviour and expectations. There is an increased focus in KCSiE on behaviour and behaviour management and online monitoring and filtering systems.

The safeguarding steering group has met and agreed some specific actions to be taken. These include:

- more to be done with care experienced students
- attendance monitoring
- mental health strategies for male students, particularly at Oddicraft Lane and Station Park
- building resilience
- online behaviours.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the update provided
- b) to recommend that the board approve the updated Safeguarding Policy.

15 **INTERNAL STUDENT PROGRESSION**

The vice principal presented the report and specifically thanked Andrew Spencer for his excellent systems development work. The system now in place allows the college to automatically progress and enrol students. The current position is that the college has just short of 3,000 students

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identified as having the potential to progress. 1,000 have been approved to progress in their own curriculum areas, and 143 will progress to a different curriculum area. A number of students are on a two-year course. This comes to circa 50%.

The committee were advised that progression in some curriculum areas is down; therefore, the college is closely monitoring where these students are intending to go to. Again, staff have had a focus on those students who stick or drop down a level. The data shows that there are currently 103 (3%) who are sticking and only four who plan to drop down a level.

The committee were advised that there are 340 learners who say that they want to go into employment and that these are a risk; therefore, the college is looking at putting on some summer job-shops with some specific sessions for high needs learners and supported interns.

One member of the committee asked whether students are looking to go into employment due to financial pressures at home. Whilst having no empirical data, the view is that they are and, therefore, the college is looking at how to flex its offer so that learners can continue to study as well as working.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

(Nikki Slack and Ben Owen left the meeting at 4.30pm)

16 INTENDED DESTINATIONS REPORT

Key matters highlighted were:

- the vast majority of 16-18 and 19+ learners have a positive destination
- most are staying at college in the same area of study
- where the intended destination is not positive, all are receiving support and advice
- this will be followed up in the autumn term when actual destinations are captured and analysed.

One member of the committee noted that, for 16-18 learners, there are 166 'unknowns', and they challenged that this seemed to be high. Staff advised that, in the main, it is students who have simply not yet made a decision.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17 LEARNER VOICE REPORT

Signed : _____ *Angela Newton - Sme* _____ Chair

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Key matters highlighted were:

- The report includes the full Rate Your Course information and the minutes from the last learner voice conference. The latter was described as a really engaging session.
- The last learner voice conference in every academic year is a very open forum, and what came out of this one was the support and welcome that students receive from all staff. In terms of takeaways, these include:
 - The college needs to be better at promoting the support that is available, i.e. the services offered.
 - Advice to incoming students is 'get yourself organised'.
 - Learner voice in the college is strong.

The committee acknowledged that giving learners the opportunity to express their views to senior managers is a strength of the organisation and that, sitting alongside this, the college also listens. The vice principal indicated that the senior team are looking to strengthen the lead practitioner rep role next year, particularly in terms of their interaction with the board, i.e. what support and training they need. The committee all agreed that the synergy between learner voice and the Ofsted inspection outcome gives assurance to governors.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

18 **CEIAG REPORT**

Key matters highlighted were:

- The college has appointed specialist careers advisors for the most vulnerable, and they have been a real success.
- The intention now is to expand this with someone with additional learning support experience so that they can then focus on SEND students.
- The Work Placement team has done an excellent job, with 95% of study programme learners having had some placement during the year.
- Next year, the Work Placement team will be embedded within curriculum areas. This is really important to support the move to T Levels.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

19 **COMMITTEE ANNUAL REVIEW**

The director of governance introduced this item and explained that this was an opportunity to reflect on the year shortly to be concluded and forward plan for next year. She invited the committee to consider terms of reference, membership, meeting dates and the work plan.

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When considering the terms of reference, there were a number of comments and observations, including:

- A need not to be too specific or the committee loses flexibility.
- Perhaps something to be said about taking positive risks and encouraging change.
- There is potentially something to include regarding preparing for adulthood values.
- A key point when looking at implementation of a values-based curriculum is the ability to test impact.
- There is perhaps something to say in relation to skills in the local area.
- How does this committee ensure accountability, i.e. a really great employer responsive offer? This perhaps needs more emphasis and evidence of responding in real-time. A suggestion was to use the employer boards more.

It was agreed that a standing agenda item next year would be feedback from chairs of the employer advisory boards.

Chairs

2023/24

The director of governance confirmed that she would try to incorporate the observations and suggestions into an updated set terms of reference which would then be presented to the board for approval. In terms of membership, the director of governance advised that Jane Peacock would be joining the committee next year. Subject to this addition, the committee were happy to recommend that membership go into the next year unchanged. The committee were happy to note the meeting dates and agree the work plan proposed.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the update provided
- b) to recommend that the board approve amended terms of reference
- c) to recommend that, with the addition of Jane Peacock, committee membership roll forward unchanged into 2023/24.

20 **AOB**

There were no items of additional business.

21 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

This was confirmed as Thursday 28th September 2023 at 5pm. However, after the meeting had taken place, this date was pushed back to Monday 9th October at 5pm.

22 **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH MAY 2023**

Signed : _____
Angela Newton - Saxe

_____ Chair

Date: 09/10/2023

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2023.

There were no matters arising.

Meeting closed at 4.50pm.

Signed : _____ *Angela Newton - Sams* _____ Chair

Date: 09/10/2023