

# Waltham Forest College



THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2022

## MEMBERSHIP

### Governors:

Alison Morris (Chair), Gary Davies, Janet Gardner (Principal), Andrew Hall, Susannah Hume, Fosterer Joseph

**Co-opted external member:** Ian Gurman

### In Attendance:

Hassan Rizvi - Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality (DPCQ)

Stella Hawkins -Director of Curriculum (DoC)

Rochelle Saneria - Director of Curriculum (DoC)

Amir Ahmed - Director of Learner Services, Marketing & Communications (DoLS)

Jack McCabe - Director of Teaching and Learning, (DoTL)

Meghan Muller – Student Governor

### Clerk to the Corporation

Naomi Shoffman - Director of Governance (DoG)

## 10 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Jack McCabe the newly appointed Director of Teaching and Learning, and Rochelle Saneria the new Director of Curriculum.

Apologies for absence received from Ian Gurman and Vanessa Georgiou, both due to a clash with work commitments

## 11 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no issues included on the agenda for the meeting in which they had a personal interest relative to the College.

## 12 MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record. It was confirmed that all follow up actions were completed.

## 13 CURRICULUM & QUALITY UPDATE INCLUDING PROGRESS AGAINST KPIS- Term 2

The DPCQ introduced the report which provides a summary of term 2. He highlighted progress against key performance indicators including:

- Retention
- Attendance
- Learner Satisfaction rates
- GCSE November 2021 resits and pass rates

The DPCQ then outlined progress on the quality cycle including:

- GCSE results, the reasons for outcomes and number of resits
- Now the College has received the topics for GCSE exams for this year these are the focus of schemes of work

- Good progress has been made on FS exams
- The College has now moved on to external assessments but it is too early to comment on achievement
- Work placements have been challenging but an action plan is in place
- UCAS applications have been submitted and we are awaiting the outcomes

A Governor asked in respect of the topics submitted for GCSE's what the general feeling is as to the impact this might have on the students' performance. The DPCQ explained the differences that have been introduced, how they have been presented. The revised schemes of work are in line with topics and students will be asked to answer more narrow and prescriptive questions.

A Governor asked if there is a link between attendance and retention rate. The DPCQ explained the issues and the particular cohort of learners that have been affected, which is due to many external factors such as work, Covid and care commitments. We have changed certain processes and offered support to enable learners to attend. Learners are still being encouraged to attend on site as far as is possible. The Principal expanded more on what the attendance issues are and how they are being addressed through changing working patterns. The Chair asked how this compares with other Colleges and the Principal responded that this seems to be an issue nationally.

A Governor asked how work placements compares with last year. The DPCQ said that last year there had been different ways of securing work placements, which were mainly remote, but this year we are still being impacted by Covid as many employers won't have students on site even if they are fully vaccinated. So, we are looking at other ways to provide work placements. Ofsted recognises the challenges with work placements and may recognise virtual placements.

A Governors asked whether there is going to be a further problem in attainment because of attendance, and the change in GCSE pass rates. The DPCQ explained how this is being addressed to maximise chances for students who need help. He explained the reasons for the Eng. and Maths variance but cautioned that we also need to wait for the new national averages to be published.

A Governor asked whether an evaluation has been carried out as to which of the activities and actions put into place have more impact on outcomes than others. She offered to help the team to look at how to prioritise activities. The DPCQ explained the activities taking place that are beginning to have impact but there is some way to go. The Principal advised that early indications show that attendance starting to improve. She welcomed the offer of support but in reality, it seemed to be a range of activities that work in tandem not necessarily something that can be formulaic.

**The Committee noted the progress on the key aspects of curriculum and quality**

#### **14. QIP UPDATE**

The DPCQ introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The key areas in the plan for improvement
- Identified courses where outcomes are not so good are being monitored through performance board meetings, deep dives and additional support needs for students.
- Maths entry level outcomes
- Attendance is being addressed through a combination of actions which will bring about improvement.
- The actions are reviewed regularly for impact.

A Governor asked -how does attendance feed into decisions about what courses are offered in the future. The DPCQ explained the range of factors that are considered in planning the curriculum with the biggest weighting being employer need and skills demand.

**The Committee noted the progress on the Quality Improvement Plan for 2021- 22**

## 15. LEARNER VOICE REPORT

The DPCQ introduced the report which provides an update on the learner voice progress and actions. He advised that the QDP survey outcomes were mainly very positive.

The Student Governor and the DoLS were then invited to add a bit more around the concerns that were raised in the survey. The DoLS commented that there was a high response rate to the survey and highlighted the distance travelled in the upper quartile.

The student Governor reported that students feel safe in College and that for those who said they didn't feel safe it was more about outside of College such as transport, street lighting etc. The DoLS explained that while these are issues out of the College's control individual areas of concern have been addressed where possible.

The student Governor confirmed that students are receiving the AIG that they need. The DoLS said that the key is how we communicate to students what actions the College has taken in response to the learner voice feedback so we will be producing 'you said we did' posters.

A Governor commented that he had been in the College and seen how safeguarding is addressed. He commended, along with other members, the high response rate which gives a lot more weight to the outcomes.

Another Governor asked how focused are we on the relativities between the College and benchmark as she had picked up where the agreed percentages are relatively high against other institutions but low for WFC. The DPCQ and DoLS, said that there is still some work to be done around the phrasing of questions, as there needs to be a consistent approach. Other areas that are important are students' well-being, making sure they are empowered and looking after their and peers' mental health.

**The Committee noted the positive improvement in Learner voice feedback and actions being taken to ensure that all students feel safe and progress in their studies.**

## 16. SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT REPORT

The DoLS spoke to the report and highlighted the following points:

- There has been a decrease in referrals compared to the previous year
- The breakdown of all the safeguarding concerns and key categories and headlines.
- Sexual harassment and sexual violence are currently a focus of Ofsted
- The College has a live PREVENT action plan.
- A lot of positive work is being done by the College. around Mental health
- The Staff training that has been delivered during term including the recently added InCel

A Governor suggested contacting MIND in Hackney and Waltham forest who have some useful resources and material the College could use. The DoLS said he would follow this up

The Chair asked whether there were concerns that referrals may not be in line with what we hear from other quarters. The DoLS agreed that this could be the case and explained that the College will bring in experts where a particular issue is raised such as forced marriage. Also, when looking at key themes if referrals are low then staff will usually have had awareness sessions around said issues. The Principal said that as a College we have been very concerned about the number of learners and staff facing challenges in mental health which is causing extra stress on staff who are not experts in this and we are aware of added pressure put on staff, so this does not give a full picture.

The Committee thanked the DoLS for a very good and accessible report.

**The Committee:**

- **Noted the safeguarding trends and actions to mitigate risks**

- **Noted work undertaken on the key theme sexual harassment and sexual violence**

## **17. PROGRESS REPORT FOR FE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROJECT**

The DPCQ spoke to this paper and highlighted the following points:

- This report went to the Finance and Resources Committee to monitor the financial side of it. The report is coming to this Committee to monitor quality
- The decisions to award the bid were delayed by 6-8 weeks so we were late in starting but are confident we will be able to deliver this.
- The College is now in receipt of the 60% of the grant and the remainder will be paid on completion of the project.
- There have been some concerns that the other College is behind schedule. We have shared this with the College and they have reassured us they will meet their target
- In terms of this College's progress it is planned for all staff to go out on industry placement and updating beyond the scope of the project.
- Staff feedback has been very positive.

The Principal said that this is a great project, but the challenge is that due to the lateness of the decision we have had to deliver in one term rather than over 6 months as it has to be completed by 31 March which is the DfE's financial year end. Staff have done a fantastic job delivering this along with everything else going on in the College. The Chair congratulated staff on this achievement.

**The Committee noted the progress of the project**

## **18. TEACHING AND LEARNING REPORT**

The DoTL spoke to this paper and highlighted the following points:

- The majority of lessons observed have met the expected ETF standards,
- Several deep dives have been carried out which have highlighted some clear strengths and good practice as well identifying key areas for improvement
- A range of initiatives have been introduced to support teachers, who have found returning to work challenging following the pandemic
- CPD, both internal and external, is ongoing

A Governor commended the five basic principles that have been introduced by the DoTL to drive behaviours. The Principal commented that the DoTL's work has already had impact as has the new DoC

Another Governor commended the very interesting paper and asked the DoTL how he has chosen the five principles and how is the positive shift being measured. The DoTL explained that he had picked the five from several aspects and explained the rationale and evidence for each one. He then explained how the impact is being measured which is low level at the moment but hopefully will be part of learning walks going forward.

The Chair asked what are the main challenges around TLA and the DoTL responded that they are the behaviours and expectations of learners which need to be embedded at the beginning of their studies.

**The Committee noted the on the key aspects of TLA**

## **19. RISK REGISTER REVIEW**

The DPCQ highlighted the risks on the College risk register pertaining to this Committee and the actions being taken to mitigate risk

- Termly Performance boards are conducted to track and monitor the progress of curriculum deliver and quality, with actions being out in place, as warranted.
- College wide and bespoke CDP sessions are delivered to address areas for improvement with impact being measured through classroom drop-ins and Deep Dives.

- Monthly Predicted achievement board for 2022-23 in ongoing, to ensure additional support put in place for at risk learners.

The Committee discussed the risks, actions taken and recommendations for further improvement and were satisfied overall on the actions being taken to mitigate risk. The Chair thanked the DPCQ for the report and agreed that it is useful looking at the risks relevant to this group.

**The Committee received and noted the updated College Risk Register.**

**20. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

The Principal recorded her thanks to the DPCQ and his team for picking up the slack whilst vacant roles were waiting to be filled.

**21. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was agreed to change the date of the next scheduled meeting to accommodate some members who have work commitments then.

**22. ITEMS TO BE ADDRESSED AT FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The agendas for future meetings will include items as per the agreed business cycle for 2021/22.

**20.26 finish**

**These minutes have been approved by the Curriculum and Quality Committee and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

.....Alison Morris .....

...18 May 2022.....

**Signed**

**Date**