

Minutes of Norton Radstock College Quality Committee Meeting held Tuesday 16 February 2010 at 6pm

Present: Mr R Newbery (Chair)
Mrs S Arayan (Principal)
Dr D Protheroe
Mr R Wynn-Jones

In Attendance: Mr J Holland (Clerk)
Mr A Ormerod (Academic Director)
Mrs P Routledge (Senior Manager Student Support Services)
(until 6.30pm)
Mr P Skinner (Senior Manager Standards)
Mrs S Seldon (Senior Manager Teaching and Learning)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Mr D Evans.

Presentation by Penny Routledge on Safeguarding

PR explained to the meeting the main actions taken on safeguarding and had a handout that Governors could take at the end of the meeting.

The main points were:

- Policies and Procedures apply across all sites.
- All sites have visitor books and badges.
- Visitors are requested to wear badges and can be asked for identification to obtain a badge.
- The message has been reinforced that staff must wear badges and students can be challenged to produce their ID cards or risk being escorted off site.
- Personnel have been checking all CRB records are available and getting CRB checks done on Governors.
- Staff are being asked to sign that they have read and understood their responsibilities from the Safeguarding Policies which are quick linked on the College Intranet home page.
- All staff have been given the opportunity to get a Level 1 Child Protection qualification with designated staff taking higher qualifications.
- There is an ongoing anti-bullying and respect for others campaign.

Governors queried if there was Facebook bullying. Although Facebook is banned on the College system, students are getting around this by using phones or devices such as Dongles or students using their own laptop. Some parents have been contacted and seen pages accessed. If this is happening in classes, the tutor should challenge the student. There is a balance between safeguarding the learner and the use of IT.

PR confirmed she was not seeing instances of male on girl violence but has dealt with two girl on girl cases.

2. **Minutes of Quality meeting held on 26 November 2009 for approval**

DP proposed the Minutes be agreed, this was seconded by RWJ and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

3. **Matters arising sheet**

JH took the meeting through the matters arising sheet which was noted.

PS clarified that the Apprenticeship success rate of 22% for Health Public Services and Care mentioned in the Minutes had been an issue for the LSC. The College has now been allowed to continue offering programmes in this area and it is showing a significant improvement in the current year.

4. **Minutes of meeting to discuss Quality issues held on 11 November 2009 for information**

The Minutes were **noted**.

5. **Update on Teaching and Learning Observations for information**

The Chair welcomed SS back to her first meeting for some time.

SS explained that the College had been able to access some free Consultancy through LSIS and this work is in two phases.

Phase one included:

- Updated observation record embedding Safeguarding and new Common Inspection Framework into the observation process.
- Carried out shadowed observations with Heads of Schools.
- Correlation of grade between Consultant and College at 85%. 77% of grades Good or Better with no Inadequate grades.

Phase two using 8 further free days will consists of thematic observations:

- Strand one - classroom environment for learning.
- Strand two - quality of tutorials.

The meeting noted the observation table which showed 70.3% at Good or Better and included original grade 4 and 3 where staff had received support to improve.

SS outlined the various improvement strategies being used and how progress is monitored and followed up.

The meeting thanked SS for her report.

6. **Heads of School report highlighting the main current issues for information**

The meeting found the reports very useful and thought the reports would benefit from having a standard format.

The meeting picked up that student behaviour is a contributing factor to issues listed with expulsions affecting retention. The College has made available Staff Development to deal with challenging behaviour.

The meeting thought that the report could focus more on causes for celebration such as HE progression etc.

Staff are often faced with dealing with student personal problems and trying to teach at the same time.

AO highlighted the excellent progression made on the Foundation Degree for Teaching Assistants.

AO explained that the high level of staff sickness in Engineering is now improved.

AO clarified that the Local Authority plan was to close Broadlands School within 5 years. A problem to be resolved if the site was sold was the College having a building on Local Authority land.

AO clarified that an Away Day had been organised for Heads of School at which problems of transfers between Foundation Learning Tier and other Schools was one of the topics to be discussed.

With regard to the Heads of School involvement at the 9 June meeting, the meeting agreed that all Heads of School should be invited to give a five minute presentation to the meeting. By the time of the meeting, the Heads of School should have a good idea of achievement for the year. RN also wanted an indication of what progress was being made towards Schools achieving Grade 1s.

7. **Update on Framework for Excellence for information**

PS explained that this was provided for Governor information.

He referred the meeting to page 17 of the report which highlighted the College outcome in 08/09 for the various measures and a position statement for 09/10.

For the two grades of learner views and responsiveness to employers, these have had sufficient responses to be calculated this year and are projected as 'good' for both measures.

The main text of the report was to give the meeting an overview of the results profile nationally for the various measures.

PS referred the meeting to page 26 of the papers which showed which grades would be published in the future.

The report was noted by the meeting.

8. **Update on progress on key performance indicators for information**

The meeting thanked PS for his paper on mapping the key performance indicators.

The meeting spent some time discussing the list of key performance indicators contained in the mapping exercise and asked if Governors could rely on a small set of KPIs to measure the performance of the College, say by the Framework for Excellence measures only. PS pointed out that these are only issued on an annual basis and supplementary measures had been developed for ongoing internal monitoring.

The being no conclusion to this, it was agreed to carry on the discussion outside of the meeting with the Chair of Governors.

9. **Verbal update on latest success rates for information**

PS took the meeting through his report on latest success rates.

The meeting noted that the overall success rate for 08/09 was 77% under the old methodology (1% under target), but now 75% under the new methodology introduced by the LSC in mid January of this year.

PS took the meeting through the comparison to national rate on 16-18 provision by subject sector area. This age group has performed well and is now 4.5% on average above national rate with 10 of the 12 subject sector areas above national rates.

Subject sector 14 had shown an increase in success rates of 19.7% when compared to 07/08 but was still below the national rate. Subject sector 15, due to delayed results from the awarding body, held back its performance to below national rate.

Trends of concern on 16-18 provision were:

- A drop in performance in SSA 15 linked to declining achievement rates.

- Insufficient improvement of achievement on skills for life to match or exceed the national average.

The results on 19+ provision were more mixed with results above national rate in only 7 of the 13 subject sector areas. SSA14 was of particular concern.

Trends of concern on 19+ provision were:

- A decline in success on long courses, particularly at Levels 1 and 4+.
- Declining performance in SSA 1 and 14 linked to declining retention and achievement rates and in SSA 15 due to a decline in achievement.
- Declining skills for life performance due chiefly to retention issues.
- A decline in retention on short courses.

The following were highlighted to assist the meeting interpret the data and the initiatives being taken by the College to improve success rates:

- Staffing changes have been made at Keynsham Secretarial and Business Centre which should improve results in Business.
- The shortening of course length in SSA 14 should improve success rates as students are more focuses on achieving within a year.
- The positive impact of a new Head of School for 19+ work in SSA14.
- Changed handling of Infection Control short courses.
- The AAT offer remains an issue, with the College unable to recruit suitable staff and having to withdraw the offer of the final year Technician level and the College is looking at how to progress this.

The meeting thanked PS for the clarity of his report.

10. **Quality Improvement Plan latest update for information**

The meeting noted the report which covered the action plan taken from the 2008/2009 Self Assessment Report and linked to the College Strategic Plan for 2009/2010 to 2012/13.

The second part of the report was the top level actions from the Academic Schools' Self Assessment Reports with sub actions being held on the Covalent system.

The meeting noted the report.

Upon query, SA clarified that teaching staff are expected to do 30 hours CPD per year and it is hoped to maintain the budget at current levels.

Upon query, SA clarified that the College should have a better idea of the final funding for 2010/2011 on 16 March and that College Management were already doing work to identify areas of cost savings.

SA informed the meeting that the Investors in People reaccreditation was taking place on 22-24 March.

11. **Review Terms of Reference to agree recommendation to Governing Body**

JH tabled the paper 'New Focus of the Committee' which had been discussed at an earlier meeting to aid the discussions on revising the Terms of Reference.

It was agreed to delete the paragraph (d) that referred to skills audit etc as this was viewed as part of the Search and Nomination Committee remit.

The meeting agreed to add the following to the Terms of Reference:

- Review and approve Quality Improvement Plans.
- Review and approve Quality Strategy updates.
- Review Satisfaction Survey highlighting issues through the Minutes to the Corporation.

12. **Membership of the Committee for discussion**

With David Protheroe ceasing to be a Governor on 30 March 2010, the Committee will then be three under strength from its Terms of Reference composition of 6 Governors, plus the Principal. The Committee is happy to work with coopted members and wanted the Search and Nomination Committee to progress filling the vacancies.

13. **Any other business**

PS explained to the meeting that the Quality Assurance Agency had recently carried out an Integrated Quality Enhancement and Review on all the HE provision at the College. This had been a two day exercise focussing on assessment.

The outcome was positive with some good practice highlighted and recommendations (none of which were categorised as 'essential').

The next meeting is Tuesday 8 June at 6pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.