

**GOVERNORS/MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mark O'Sullivan [Chair], Alison Ashman, Marian Curran [Principal] (part), Professor James Devenney, Margaret Harlock, Richard Hanks (part), James Townsend, Clare Williamson [8]

**ATTENDING:** Svetlana Bajic-Raymond [Interim Vice Principal], Vicki Haigh [Head of Teaching, Learning & Assessment], Peter J Harrison [Clerk to Governors]

**APOLOGIES:** Governors' none [0], and

**ABSENT Without Apology:** None [0]

**CIRCULATION:** All Governors, College website

**QUORUM REQUIRED:** 3/6 (Voting Committee members)

Documents Circulated/Tabled\* at Meeting: **Circulation:** All Governors, Clerk to Governors, Senior Leadership Team, & [College Website after signature].

- Document [A] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee Terms of Reference' – circulated previously
- Document [B] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Results 2020 Summary Report' – circulated previously
- Document [C] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Results 2020 Booklet' – circulated previously
- Document [D] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Teaching learning and Assessment Report' – circulated previously
- Document [E] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Continuous Professional Development (Teachers) Offer 2020/2021' – circulated previously
- Document [F] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Curriculum Offer 2020/2021' – circulated previously
- Document [G] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Student Employability Destination Report Senior Leadership Team Report' – circulated previously
- Document [H] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Self assessment Report 2019/2020' – circulated previously
- Document [I] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021' – circulated previously
- Document [J] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Student Attendance 2020/2021 Report' – circulated previously
- Document [K] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Student Attendance Data Report' – circulated previously
- Document [L] – 'St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Committee Risk Register Report' – circulated previously

## Committee Briefing:

*'Teaching and Learning the Experience of Staff and Students in an Uncertain Time'*

By Vicki Haigh [Head of Teaching, Learning & Assessment]

### Applied General Curriculum

Using the example of the Applied General [AG] curriculum, the presentation outlined the changes taking place and the actions being taken by the College to address the current Covid-19 situation which has created the disruption to teaching and learning for both Staff and Students.

**Reformed Applied General** – the College adopted the Reformed Applied General [RAG] courses last year starting with Level 3 and moving to Level 2 this year. With the new courses there is a reduction in the emphasis on coursework and there are now mid and end-term examinations. In addition, the Examining Boards have modified the standards of assessment and content, and placed a much greater focus on the outcomes, whether leading to a Foundation Degree, University place or Employment. The expectation is that the Student will acquire the technical skills and experience related to the Applied General course being followed. There is a mixture of examination or of external assessment in both the one or two A-Level option. In a typical two year course, there are two to three examinations. Students applying for the RAG courses, in a number of cases lack the necessary skills of examination, and maybe under the misapprehension that the courses consist in the main of coursework assessment rather than the examination. Our Careers Education Information Advice Guidance [CEIAG] is comprehensive around this, nevertheless there is a lag between preparation in secondary school and the methods of assessment now in place when students come to us. One of the lessons learned in the trial run last year was that the course content did not cover all the actual examination questions to the confusion of some Students sitting the examination. But the Examining Board expects the Student to have acquired the required skills, and then to address the new question.

**Covid-19** – The Examining Boards have been consulting about the possibility of reducing the number of units in the courses; changing the external assessment processes; altering the period of the practical assessments; in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the numbers of Students at any one time taking part in performance group assessments have been adjusted. There are likely to be more changes to come but at present the changes are minimal. Students entering the College in Year 12, in addition, but to a lesser extent, also those returning for Year 13, are showing gaps in learning and acquisition of practical skills, and Staff are addressing these by testing and personal support. The first of the examinations take place in January 2021, and this will allow some Students, if they wish to re-sit the examination in the summer of 2021.

**Discussion** – the Committee then discussed the topics raised, and the following points were made by Governors:

- Very grateful for the update about the Reformed Applied General curriculum
- Staff supporting Students recognise the need to prepare the Students for the examination
- The College is also working on Continuous Professional Development for Staff with a view to improving the standards of assessment across the College. This is particularly important as there was a degree of variation experienced in the Centre Assessment Grade [CAG] process earlier in the year. Teacher Assessment without Public Examination might be put in place again in 2021
- The danger of 'teaching to examination' has always been recognised by the College, but now with the introduction by the Office for Standards in Education of the new Education Inspection Framework [EIF] it has created a useful environment for improved collaboration between Staff
- Staff training is continuing as we assess the new grade boundaries in the different subjects.

The Chair thanked Vicki Haigh for her very useful and informative briefing.

[Marian Curran joined the meeting 16:21 hrs]

ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	AGREED ACTION
<b>1. Welcome</b>	<p>1.1 <i>Welcome</i>: Mark O'Sullivan [Chair] welcomed everyone to the virtual Office Team meeting, including the new members of the Committee, who were each asked to introduce themselves. The meeting started with the 'Prayer of Saint Brendan'.</p> <p>1.2 <i>Apologies</i>: None. Richard Hanks joined the meeting later.</p> <p>1.3 <i>Absent</i>: None</p> <p>1.4 <i>Quorate</i>: The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	
<b>2. Declarations of Interest &amp; Disability Access &amp; Diversity</b>	<p>2.1 <i>Declarations of Interest</i>: The members of the Committee confirmed there had been no change.</p>	Next Agenda & Any Governor
<b>3. Committee Business</b>	<p>Document [A] – '<i>St Brendan's Sixth Form College – Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee Terms of Reference</i>' – circulated previously</p> <p>3.1 <i>Annual Review Committee Terms of Reference</i>: The Clerk to Governors noted for the benefit of the Committee a couple of items that might need to be revised due to a change in nomenclature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Item 9 – makes reference to the 'Common Inspection Framework' the new title is the 'Education Inspection Framework'</li> <li>▪ Item 10 – refers to the 'Self Appraisal Review' [SAR] the correct title now in use is 'Self Assessment Review'</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that both these changes should be made, and the Clerk to Governors was instructed to inform the Chair of Governors who is conducting a review and amendment to the Framework of Governance document which contains the Terms of Reference for the Governors' Committees.</p>	Clerk to Governors
<b>4. Minutes Previous Meeting</b>	<p>4.1 <i>Minutes of Meeting</i> [Governors' Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee] [24 June 2020]: The Minutes were adopted as a correct and true record and passed for electronic signature and publication on the website.</p>	Next Agenda & Clerk to Governors

<b>5. Actions Review</b> [Agenda not itemised]	5.1 <i>None.</i>	Next Agenda
<b>6. Matters Arising</b>	6.1 <i>None</i>  [Richard Hanks joined the meeting at 16:34 hrs]	Next Agenda
<b>7. Curriculum Teaching Learning &amp; assessment</b>	<p>Document [B] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Results 2020 Summary Report</i>’ – circulated previously</p> <p>Document [C] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Results 2020 Booklet</i>’ – circulated previously</p> <p>Document [D] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Teaching learning and Assessment Report</i>’ – circulated previously</p> <p>Document [E] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Continuous Professional Development (Teachers) Offer 2020/2021</i>’ – circulated previously</p> <p>Document [F] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Curriculum Offer 2020/2021</i>’ – circulated previously</p> <p>Document [G] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Student Employability Destination Report Senior Leadership Team Report</i>’ – circulated previously</p> <p><b>7.1 Examination Results and Centre Assessment Grades [Update]:</b> The Interim Vice Principal addressed the Committee and enquired, given the full discussion of these reports that took place at the meeting of the Board of Governors on 15 October, whether there were any further questions or observations to be made by the Committee. There were no questions and the Interim Vice Principal then provided an update.</p> <p>The College was presented with 100 enquiries about the 2020 grade results as finally awarded. All but two of these were settled amicably by the College. There were two appeals, using the College’ Compliments, Concerns, Complaints Policy, both appeals cited discrimination or bias as the basis for the appeal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first case was settled amicably there being no case to answer’, and the opportunity for a re-sit of the examination was also available</li> <li>• The second case presented no evidence of discrimination, and the young person also had significant personal issues. The Appeal at that stage was dismissed. Following the Compliments, Concerns, Complaints Policy, the Complainant pursued the matter on appeal to the Principal. However, there has been no further action by the Complainant, and the case has now been deemed as closed in October. There is an opportunity for the Complainant to take the case to the Education Skills Funding Agency, but given the lapse of time it seems there is no evidence that that option has been followed.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee noted the report</p>	

<p><b>Curriculum Teaching Learning &amp; assessment</b> [Continued...]</p>	<p><i>7.2 Quality of Teaching, Learning &amp; Assessment:</i> The Head of Teaching, Learning &amp; Assessment presented a PowerPoint™ setting out the content of her report, in summary:</p> <p>7.2.1 Assessment – revision of the Key Achievement Gateway process</p> <p>Following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the College introduced a ‘Blended Learning Model’, which involves a combination of remote teaching and learning delivered electronically, and in the classroom. The College timetable has been amended to take account of the required health and safety requirements with the introduction of the ‘Hands-Face-Space’ model. Year 12 Students and Year 13 Students attend in classroom on alternate weeks to reduce unnecessary contact, and to maintain the Student ‘bubbles’, with the intention of containing any infection where possible. This has placed some pressure on Teaching Staff who might be required to manage a variety of live/online and face to face sessions in any one day, while also providing the appropriate teaching and learning support to both those in face-face contact in the classroom or remotely. These scenarios have been accompanied by some technical issues, with consequent impact on Teacher method, and lesson content.</p> <p>Lesson planning also took account of the need to support Students in ‘catchup’ sessions after the disruption of the first lockdown, and also to support Year 12 Students who are in transition into College life and who have suffered a variety of experiences in their different schools of origin.</p> <p>Teacher Assessment in 2018-2020 revealed a number of shortcomings and variation in practice across the College. The policy and the standard had been set in the following terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assessment is regular and mindful of workload</li> <li>▪ Assessment follows the Principles of Assessment as set out in our policy</li> <li>▪ Assessment is agreed across a whole course, standardised, moderated and results are published on the course Markbook</li> <li>▪ Assessment is used to inform Teachers of Student progress, identify need and enable them to plan effectively</li> <li>▪ Assessment is used to determine the Progress Grades entered at Key Achievement Gateway [KAG] points which in turn will result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ College Data being robust, accurate and reliable</li> <li>▪ College Data can inform the interventions required to support a Student in excelling</li> <li>▪ College Data is used as a valid measure of progress in time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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<p><b>Curriculum Teaching Learning &amp; assessment</b> [Continued...]</p>	<p>However, there was evidence that the policy was not always being fully applied. From the lessons learned, reasons for the variation in Assessment were identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff ambition for the Students wanting them to be motivational and encouraged</li> <li>▪ Staff wanting to show course progress, or being cautious of demonstrating underperformance</li> <li>▪ In many cases, the National Grade boundary/standardisation of results caused results to be lower than expected compared to 2018</li> <li>▪ A-Level courses had just completed first/second full cycle of the new linear programme, which incorporated the national standardisation above, and Teachers do not yet have secure knowledge of the assessment boundaries to accurately predict outcomes</li> <li>▪ Formative Assessment has not been considered enough to ensure it is weighted and robust enough to use for KAG entry.</li> <li>▪ With so many variables that can heavily influence the outcomes of our Students, asking for predictions of eventual performance months ahead of time is a somewhat unrealistic task</li> </ul> <p>To address the issues, the College used the Assessed Grades [CAG] process offered by Ofqual; although controversial in its application nationally, it did bring with it many merits. In particular, the standardised approach to whole cohort grade entry, the ranking exercise and the insistence on using objective data available knowledge to avoid any emotional attachments or the subjective opinions of a Teacher. The College adopted the model applying it to our own Key Assessment Grades [KAG] process and piloting it for the first time with two groups of Students: Access to Level 3 [ATL3] and Year 13. This helped to identify the additional areas of Staff training need and Continuous Professional Development [CPD]. This coupled with the decision to discontinue individual Teacher Lesson Observation, except for new Staff, and the introduction of improved collaborative and Faculty grading of work and progress has led to an improvement in Quality Assurance. The Committee was informed that in the management's judgement, the standard of Teaching is 'Good', or better. Student feedback has commented about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The pace of lessons</li> <li>▪ Principles of instruction</li> <li>▪ Collaborative learning opportunities in the classroom as distinct from the remote learning situation – although it is recognised that Students are not</li> </ul>	
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<p><b>Curriculum Teaching Learning &amp; assessment</b> [Continued...]</p>	<p>always ready to ask a question for fear of revealing ignorance in the presence of their peers</p> <p>The College has also provided support for Students with a view to developing their skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Making notes</li> <li>▪ Recording work and progress</li> <li>▪ Planning their study and work</li> </ul> <p>The College is also working collaboratively with another Sixth Form College and is involved with the Sixth Form College Association E-Tech innovation group. With the support of the additional Department For Education ‘catch up’ scheme, the College has utilised the £56k allocated to recruit two Academic Coaches to support eligible Students in their teaching and learning.</p> <p>Throughout this lengthy presentation, Governors added questions or sought clarification of certain points. The Committee also noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The additional work and time required for Student Assessment; combined with the huge amount of additional material required to support on-line learning; combined with the technical work required to make this possible; has contributed to a great deal of pressure on College Staff. It was agreed that Teaching Learning and Assessment and the progress being made should feature as a major item on the next agenda for the Committee</li> <li>▪ Student feedback relating to the timing of notice available when a Teacher is absent due to sickness and the consequent disruption of the timetable, even though on-line lessons have been prepared and an alternative Teacher may be available to provide cover</li> <li>▪ The planned Quality Improvement Plan [QIP] stages are progressing satisfactorily</li> </ul> <p>7.2.2 Continuous Professional Development [CPD] [Teachers] – The programme of courses on offer has been developed to enable Teaching Staff to better address the changed teaching and learning situation, with each individual being allocated time to be utilised as they see fit within their specific choices, and recorded and shared with others.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p> <p>7.3 Curriculum Offer 2020/2021: The Interim Vice Principal presented the list of the courses available to Students this year. The essential changes provide a balance between Access to Level 3 [ATL3] and access to Year 12 programmes. In part due to the outcome of the CAG grades awarded for the General Certificate of Secondary Education in schools, which resulted in high numbers of higher grades, with the consequent impact on the numbers of Students wishing to enrol and follow courses for which in</p>	<p>Next Agenda</p>
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<b>Curriculum Teaching Learning &amp; assessment</b> <b>[Continued...]</b>	<p>some cases they lacked the necessary skills or knowledge. The Committee noted the report.</p> <p><i>7.4 Student Employability Destination Report:</i> Presenting the report the Interim Vice Principal noted that a revised report is due for publication in December following further analysis about the destinations of Students who left in the 2019/2020 academic year. The topic might feature on the next agenda for the Committee and address the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Careers Team and employability</li> <li>▪ Access to Level 3</li> <li>▪ Careers Fair to be held in November</li> <li>▪ Careers Ready programme</li> <li>▪ Individual Students guidance and support</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed some of these matters, briefly. The Committee noted the report.</p>	<p>Next Agenda</p>
<b>8. Quality Improvement</b>	<p>Document [H] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Self assessment Report 2019/2020</i>’ – circulated previously  Document [ I] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021</i>’– circulated previously</p> <p><i>8.1 &amp; 8.2 Self-Assessment Report [SAR] and Quality Improvement Plan [QIP]:</i> The Interim Vice Principal noted that both these documents had already been shared with the members of the Board of Governors at the meeting in October. There being no questions, the Chair, in the view of the time, moved to the next matter on the agenda.</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	
<b>9. Principals’ Report</b>	<p>Document [J] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Student Attendance 2020/2021 Report</i>’– circulated previously  Document [K] – ‘<i>St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Student Attendance Data Report</i>’– circulated previously</p> <p><i>9.1 Principals’ Report:</i> The Principal reported on the current position with impact of Blended Learning and change in timetabling with the split Year 12 and Year 13 attendance. The attendance Target for 2019/2020 was 91% and achieved was 92.6%.</p>	<p>Principal &amp; Next Agenda</p>



**Principals' Report**  
[Continued...]

Student Attendance– 31 October 2020			
2019/2020		2020/2021	
01/09/2019 – 31/10/2020		01/09/2020 – 31//10/2020	
Female	92.5%	Female	94.0%
Male	92.8%	Male	93.2%
Overall	92.6%	Overall	92.6%

The accompanying analysis of the Student Attendance for the academic year to date is generally positive [Green] across all categories with the exception of the October figures for Access to Level 3 [ATL3] Students, which stands at 84.8% well below target and down on the previous month of September [90.4%][RED]. Possible explanations may relate to:

- Students were missing from education during the Spring and Summer terms in schools, with very variable levels of support being provided by the different educational institutions
- The College has since September been running a support plan with close collaboration and early intervention contact between Staff, Parent/Carers and the Student


The Attendance in the Year 12 'bubbles' is better than the equivalent in Year 13.

In discussion, Governors noted:

- The positive work being undertaken by Staff to support Students, in their challenging transition into College life with the disruption to their education due to the pandemic
- 75% of Students use public transport or College transport to get to College, and there is no evidence that this is causing any great difficulty
- It is possible that with 2079 Students on the College roll and with only 25 cases of confirmed Covid-19 cases up to mid-October – a figure which is significantly lower than other educational establishments in the City – the College Covid-19 procedures and the 'blended' learning are at least in part responsible for safeguarding the health and well-being of both Staff and Students

<b>Principals' Report [Continued...]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of those isolating or confirmed at the College as Covid-19 cases, 11% are cases that arose in the home or community, rather than in College. In some instances a Parent may be shielding as high risk, and the Student self isolates</li> </ul> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	
<b>10. Policy Review</b>	10.1 <i>Policy Review</i> : None	
<b>11. Risk Register Review</b>	<p>Document [L] – ‘St Brendan’s Sixth Form College – Committee Risk Register Report’– circulated previously</p> <p>11.1 <i>Risk Register Review</i> [Update]: The Committee reviewed the residual AMBER Risk items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.12 – OFSTED Inspection outcomes</li> <li>2.6 – Quality improvement and leadership</li> <li>2.7 – Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on teaching and learning</li> <li>4.6 – Education Skills funding Agency funding impact</li> </ul> <p>The Committee noted the addition of the new item concerning the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the College operations, Staff and Students. In each case the remedial actions being taken or planned, while not removing the risk entirely serve to mitigate the risk. The Committee agreed that no changes were necessary,</p> <p>The Committee noted the report.</p>	Principal & Next Agenda
<b>12. Any Other Business</b>	<p>12.1 <i>New Committee Members</i>: The Committee Chair invited the new members of the Committee to comment on any issues they wished. The following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opportunity for Students to make use of on-line resources and sharing in the current circumstances is important, and it is noted that the take up by Students has been improving since the Summer Term</li> <li>The provision of the Information Technology in the Learning Resources Centre [LRC] is no longer adequate to meet the current demand imposed by on-line learning both remote and in College. The College did purchase additional laptops and loaned these to Students to support their remote learning, but many Students may come to College simply to work remotely using the better bandwidth for web access.</li> </ul>	



<b>15. Next Meeting</b>	15.1 <i>Date of Next Meeting:</i> – Wednesday, 10 March 2021 at 16:00 [To be confirmed]	Clerk/ Governors
<b>Minutes of Meeting Prepared</b>	<p>Saturday, 14 November 2020</p> <p>Peter J Harrison [Clerk to Governors]</p>	
<b>Minutes Agreed</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting agreed as true and accurate record</b></p> <p>– <b>Date:</b> Wednesday, 10 March 2021</p>  <p>Signed: _____ Committee Chair</p>	