

GOVERNORS & VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Svetlana Bajic-Raymond (SBR), Antonia Corrigan (AC) [Chair], Marian Curran (MC) [Principal], Sr Margaret Harlock MBE (SrMH), Ramatu Hassan-King (RHK), Doug Jennings (DJ) [6]

ATTENDING: Leanne Sowersby [Governance Professional], Vicki Haigh [Head of Pedagogy], Tanya Schottlander [Head of Student Wellbeing and Safeguarding], Marek Czapiga [College Chaplain]

APOLOGIES: Michelle Hazelwood (MH), Melanie Jonik (MJ), Arabella Peterson-Barreto [Head of RE] [2]

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGY: Margaret Abazie-Humphrey (MAH), Deborah Redwood (DR) [2]

CIRCULATION: All Governors, & Governance Professional unless CONFIDENTIAL.

ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	ACTION
1. Welcome/Prayer/ Apologies	AC welcomed everyone, especially RHK, TSc and VHa to their first meeting of this committee and opened the meeting with prayer.	
Committee Briefing	<p>Section 48 Inspection Preparation - APB</p> <p>APB was unable to join the meeting due to ill health. MC gave an overview.</p> <p>The overall framework includes three areas we will be assessed on: Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship. These will be divided into student outcomes, provision and leadership.</p> <p>At the start of the year, we have done an update on S48, we have led a session on how the college values can be mapped into the curriculum areas and colleagues are aware that the S48 inspection will not focus solely on RPE or chaplaincy but will look at how these elements are seen within the wider curriculum.</p> <p>There has also been work around the collective worship element, around the thought for the week, which MCz will talk about further.</p> <p>There is a vulnerability, with regard to RE A-Level, in that the ALPS moved from a grade 5 to a grade 7 this year. MC will be working with APB to ensure that there is a robust action plan in place.</p> <p>A student survey has been sent to assess whether students are seeing thought for the day and gain student feedback. There is further work to do around adapting this to our context.</p>	

	<p>There has been an update to the handbook, to now include a 5% RPE requirement – this is now total learning hours across a sixth form provision and MC has asked to check compliance with this.</p> <p>We are not expected to use the Catholic inspection framework for self-evaluation, although MC has done this, and is currently rating the full board as a 2. We are expected to be able to give a summary of where the college is at, strengths and areas of development and that there are robust action plans in place.</p> <p>There is also acknowledgment of the potential for different models for teaching RPE, including being able to do this remotely for students, which is new to the framework.</p> <p>They do expect to see the Prayer and Liturgy policy, which has been given to APB to ensure it is up to date.</p> <p>There is also mention in the update of evidence of compliance with Diocesan directives. There was a discussion around what this might mean and the potential implications.</p> <p>There is an update on Mass in college and the role of Chaplaincy on MCz’s update.</p> <p>Q – How confident are we that we are where we should be? We are about 60% there.</p> <p>Q – Do we have a plan to get to where we need to be? Yes, we are trying to cover teacher absence in RPE, we need to ensure consistency in delivery in RPE and thought for the week, as well as redefining the role of chaplaincy in the diverse community we have. The staff absence is a potential issue. The team have worked incredibly hard on the curriculum and the programme. Thought for the week is working better than thought for the day, and VH has seen this in classrooms.</p> <p>Noted that the screens are useful for refocusing on the thought for the day, and that MCz is definitely present around the college.</p>	
<p>7. College Business</p>	<p>7.3 Chaplain’s Catholic Life update: MCz gave a presentation (shared with papers)</p> <p>Q – Can we give an idea of the impact of the engagement with the students? It is difficult to capture engagement with the Chaplaincy service and the impact, as surveys asking for impact of chapel visits etc may not be easy to answer. We are documenting as much as possible; many people do come to the Chaplaincy hub and the Chapel.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the report and the action plan for 2024-2025. Concern expressed by governors that inspectors would want to see an up-to-date plan for 2025-2026, with tangible achievements, how the aims have been moderated by the experiences of 2024-25 etc. MCz advised that the presentation was updates from the last meeting and does not include everything that is being done. It would be possible to send out the current 2025-26 self-assessment report which would have more detail.</p> <p>There was further discussion around measuring impact, and governors noted the need to be able to demonstrate outcomes to inspectors, and to governors, and asked that this be considered. MCz clarified that feedback may not be as significant as in some other areas, based on conversations with other Chaplains – the aim of Chaplaincy is not to have huge numbers of students, but to have offerings that are valuable to those that access it. We are trying to capture this through RPE and student voice, such as the questionnaires done last year. There is a need to look at ways to demonstrate impacts on a concise way.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the student experience, RHK noted that she is aware of the Chaplaincy service around the college. It is also</p>	

	<p>important to consider how the service can be inclusive to all students, Catholics and non-Catholics alike.</p> <p>MCz to share the survey from RPE, which captured feedback about RPE and Chaplaincy, and the up-to-date SAR/QIP via LS</p> <p><i>MCz left the meeting</i></p>	MCz/LS
2. Declarations of Interest	There were no fresh disclosures.	
3. Minutes Previous Meeting	3.1 Minutes of previous meeting – 7 May 2025: The Minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting and were passed for electronic signature and for publication on the College website.	
4. Actions Review	<p>4.1 Actions Report: See actions report. MC gave an overview of the Ethos Day at the start of term. We talked through section 48 and the mission of the college and what this means for every student, and what it means to work in a Catholic Sixth Form College, as evidence for S48. We have discussed covering the Ethos, as well as talking to staff and students in the context of that, at the governors’ day in February. To note this as an item to be covered at governors’ day.</p> <p>4.2 Matters Arising: None</p>	LS
5. Committee Business	5.1 Committee Terms of Reference: To add something around inclusion. Terms of reference approved with that caveat.	LS
6. Principal’s Report	<p>6.1 Student Enrolment/Attendance/Retention 2025/2026: MC gave an update. Recruitment is reasonably good. Bristol had a slight dip in numbers of 16–18-year-olds, which is reflected in the numbers currently on roll. We are at 2292 and know that we have lost 100 students thus far. We are looking at the reasons for this. There is a concern around the students who chose not to return to the college for Year 13, and we need to have better follow up in place for year 12 students who may not be progressing as well as we think. MC talked through some of the reasons that has been identified for not progressing, which included moving on to apprenticeships and a desire to improve mental health.</p> <p>In terms of those who enrolled but did not start, some mentioned the travel time, which we will look at. Some did not meet the criteria for their course, some courses were full, for some, sixth form was their first choice, and they managed to get into that. At that time, only one student mentioned travel issues, and one that the environment was not right for them.</p> <p>Q – Do the students who mentioned transport issues live some distance away? Part of the issue seems to be the buses through Hanham, a number of our students have been trying to get on the buses, but they have been full. In the light of that last year, we did put on another bus. There are also some who travel from Yate, and there is the time and distance for them to travel.</p> <p>There will be further discussions around student recruitment and what this means for the future. In terms of funding, this is higher than the 2217 we were funded for last year. We will not qualify for in-year funding, but it will support funding for the next year. We need to make</p>	

	<p>sure we make day 42 with more than 2217 students.</p> <p>We will need to look at the Bristol numbers for future years, but this can be discussed in detail at Strategy.</p> <p>VH and TSc are planning to look at the students that did not come, and whether St Brendan’s was their first choice, which will inform much of the work around the interview and application process. There is also work around integration and induction with the most vulnerable learners, around reaching out to them in term five and six, rather than waiting until they get here.</p> <p>In additional there is work with year 13 returners with low attendance, to support them back onto the right track.</p> <p>We will be keeping an eye on attendance. We are currently at 84% for September, which reflects students settling in, some movement between courses, as well as some students who enrolled but did not turn up. We will likely have a better idea of where we are with attendance overall after this week. VHa noted that, as of today, attendance is 92%; we have worked with MIS on tracking that, and then we can break it down by subgroup so we know if there are any groups we need to target, so that TSc and Progress Tutors can address issues quickly.</p> <p>Q – Do we know what those who are not attending are doing? Are they earning money, caring for someone or in danger of falling into other things? There is an increase in students with caring responsibilities this year. There will be some who are lost, who we need to identify.</p>	
<p>7. College Business</p>	<p>7.1 College Mission Statement Annual Review: MC noted that there has been work with the whole staff body around how St Brendan’s admissions can serve both the Catholic and wider community, and these values are based on the gospel. Mission Review Approved</p> <p>7.2 RPE Scheme of Work: MC talked through the key points. Highlighted ensuring that we look at contemporary issues, that there is debate and the RP syllabus is responsive to issues that are happening in the world whilst also being inclusive and living our values within that. We have moved from delivering RPE to encouraging debate and discursive activity, as well as developing critical thinking in students and an appreciation of different faiths, including the Catholic faith; there is a link in the scheme of work about how this would be reflected in Catholic social teaching. There are also sections on human rights and national issues.</p> <p>VHa noted that there is a core RPE program, which is what the team felt needed to be covered based on Catholic teaching, and we also wanted to make room for the electives, which should address some of the student voice around addressing contemporary issues. No more than two or three, due to managing workload, but APB will need to lead on making sure that happens. Last year’s student voice included many positives, with some opportunities to make the programme even more positive.</p> <p>Governors noted that this approach correlates with Catholic teaching, and that it is appropriate that the Catholic influence is seen within the college, and it is not imposed.</p>	
<p>8. Student Matters</p>	<p>8.1 Student Governor Report: RHK talked through the key points of the report. Noted that the SU have not yet had much time. There are plans around international languages and there have been some successes, but the plan is to make this a big year for the Student Union. It would be useful for the union to link with MCz and TSc, who are due to meet with them soon.</p> <p>8.2 Leavers’ 2025 Destination Report: VH talked through the report. Noted that the data will be updated and confirmed in January and this is based on UCAS reports etc. Would like to look at how we define a ‘positive’ destination and be able to add more detail around this. VH</p>	

	<p>also highlighted the success of work around applications to Oxbridge.</p> <p>Discussion around NEET students. There is now a greater requirement to collect this data over a longer period, and we need to consider the best ways to do this and to maintain those relationships.</p> <p>8.3 Student Attendance Report 2024/2025: The report has been shared.</p> <p>8.4 Student Bursary Report 2024/2025: The report has been shared. Noted the work that has been done around this. TSc has been working on this, with the support of VHa. We have been able to audit and clarify the rules for the use of the bursary, so that we can update the policy and work to become better placed to use this to support our students.</p> <p>8.5 Student Disciplinary & Appeals Annual Report 2024/2025: TSc talked through the key details of the report and noted that this was produced before her arrival. Noted excellent levels of compliance and behaviour in the college. TSc discussed supporting students to avoid exclusions and the role of early interventions in this.</p> <p>Governors noted the effect of the strikes and the impact on students.</p> <p>Q – Are things more settled this year? Yes, things are more settled, but we are also in the process of discovering the needs of our new cohorts and the best ways to support them. The team continue to work on this, to ensure we stay true to what was committed to, and to be honest and transparent with what we are doing.</p> <p>We are also reviewing much of what we are doing, and future reports will include more information around work that is being done with particular groups and the impact of this.</p> <p>Q – Is there an update on the site security, given the number of people being brought on site? To discuss under the safeguarding update.</p> <p>8.6 Children In Care 2023/2024 Annual Report: The report was discussed, and it was noted that there are some inaccuracies in the data, that VHa and TSc are working through. Governors discussed the reasons around the inaccuracies, and requested that the report be revisited at the next meeting. To be followed up in February</p> <p>8.7 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update: VHa talked through the key points of the report and the ways in which the data will be used to support students. We will also be working with the Student Union around EDI. There was a discussion around the percentage of the college community are Catholic. These numbers have previously been higher than currently. It was 6% last year and is 9.7% this year. Equally split between male and female. Christian is 24.2% and Muslim 9.4%. 53.8% say they have no religious belief, but many of these, in the RPE survey, would say they are curious.</p> <p>Q – Do we know who the Catholic students are? Yes, there are 222 students who are Catholic.</p> <p>Discussion around why students are keen to attend St Brendan’s</p> <p>Governors requested a more detailed student voice report.</p>	<p>TS/VH</p> <p>VH</p>
<p>9. Safeguarding & Prevent Strategy</p>	<p>9.1 Safeguarding & PREVENT Update Report: The report has been provided by LHH. TSc talked through the report. We are now able to see where concerns are coming from, and many are coming from staff. There will continue to be a focus on multi-agency working. There have</p>	

	<p>not been significant changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education. We are expecting some guidance around students who are transgender or gender questioning. There will also be changes due to the children's well-being and schools bill.</p> <p>Filtering and monitoring are working well. There has been an increasing trend in the use of AI bots as friends / partners.</p> <p>The security staff are working well as a deterrent to intruders. Lanyard wearing compliance is excellent. Senior leaders are visible and present. The messaging will get into the community that it is difficult to get into St Brendan's. We are aware of only one person coming onto site – a former student, and this was quickly addressed.</p> <p>Q – Do we have the funding to continue to employ the security personnel? Yes, this is in the budget. We will also continue to look at funding the gate etc and then review the staffing in the light of this.</p> <p>9.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education – Governor Compliance: AC noted that she will be attending training on Prevent.</p> <p>Discussion around the National College training for governors, which should be coming out soon, and will cover the KCSIE compliance.</p>	
10. Policy Reviews	<p>10.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure: Any updates during the year to be added as appendices.</p> <p>Policy Approved and recommended to full board for approval. Proposed AC, seconded SrMH.</p>	
11. Risk Management	<p>11.1 Review of Board of Governors' Risk Register Items [update]: AC talked through the key risks relating to the committee. Noted the improved recruitment of students of faith.</p> <p>Actions around S48 have been discussed in this meeting, as well as actions to ensure we meet safeguarding requirements. There have also been discussions around addressing poor student retention and the possible impact of this, especially in the light of Bristol numbers, as well as the recruitment of students of faith. Governors also noted the risk around mental health, which could be discussed at a later meeting.</p>	
12. Report Items to Board of Governors	<p>12.1 Identify Items to Report to the Board of Governors: Summary of discussion.</p> <p>12.2 Committee Briefing Next Meeting: Update on RE / Chaplaincy</p>	
13. Other Business	<p>13.1 Other business: Welcome VHa and TSc to this committee and thanks noted.</p> <p>Noted that the papers were well presented</p>	
14. Next Meeting	<p>Wednesday 4 February 2026 – Needs to be moved – 5 February – agreed.</p> <p>Wednesday 6 May 2026</p>	
Minutes Agreed	<p>Minutes agreed as true and accurate record Thursday 5 February 2026:</p> <p>Signed: Committee Chair</p>	