

GOVERNORS & VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Margaret Abazie-Humprey (MAH), Antonia Corrigan (AC) [Chair], Marian Curran (MC) [Principal], Sr Margaret Harlock MBE (SrMH), Ramatu Hassan-King (RHK), Michelle Hazelwood (MH), Doug Jennings (DJ), Deborah Redwood (DR) [8]

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

APOLOGIES: Melaine Jonik (MJ) [1]

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGY: None [0]

CIRCULATION: All Governors, & Governance Professional unless CONFIDENTIAL.

ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	ACTION
1. Welcome/Prayer/Apologies	AC welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. Apologies were accepted.	
Committee Briefing	<p>Enrichment</p> <p>VH gave a presentation, detailing the work being done around enrichment and to map the opportunities more coherently. Governors noted that this was a very thorough and impressive presentation.</p> <p>Q – Do any of these activities cost students anything? No, if it is part of a course, and carries a cost, we subsidise this where possible.</p> <p>Q – Are we taking account of the normal hours of work when scheduling activities? The majority of activities are scheduled in a way that does not exceed the usual day.</p> <p>Governors noted the positive impacts of enrichment activities, and their appreciation of the work being done.</p>	
2. Declarations of Interest	There were no fresh disclosures.	
3. Minutes Previous Meeting	3.1 – Minutes of the previous meeting – 17 September 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.	

<p>4. Actions Review</p>	<p>4.1 Actions Report: See actions report. Terms of Reference – discussion around concerns, compliments and complaints and this not having been addressed in this committee. MC talked through the process. Agreed to leave this on the terms of reference, moved to term 3, and to add to the next agenda. Safeguarding should be termly. The mission statement appears twice. Have discussed at Strategy making sure all terms of reference align with the strategic plan. 4.2 Matters Arising: None.</p>	<p>LS</p>
<p>5. Principal's Report</p>	<p>5.1 Student Enrolment/Attendance/Retention 2025/2026 / 5.2 Student Recruitment 2026/2027: MC gave an update. We are at 2318 currently. We had the final open evening of the year for recruitment, with a 44% turnout. Total offers made is 1872, acceptances at 1401 and we are now in the process of anticipating what our numbers will be. We are aiming for 2350, and need to get / confirm 500 more applications, which we are positive about being able to achieve. There is significant work going on in marketing and enrolment. Historic trends show that retention is up, with some good work going on in access to level 3 – we will be looking at the 117 who are enrolled and how many will progress to year 12, or onto level 3; we have a target of 60% to progress. Most metrics are up, with a small dip with regards to year 13. Overall retention is holding at 92%. The QAR retention for this academic year is 87.6%, which is up 3.7% on last year. Discussion around a slight dip in attendance for some groups. Last year the main concern was attendance for the access to level 3 group at 79.2%, which is now at 83.2%. Years 12 and 13 attendance are both up, and above the FE average of 85%. This is a positive trend showing that the strategies we have in place are having an impact.</p>	
<p>6. College Business</p>	<p>6.2 Chaplaincy update: MCz talked through the key points of his report. Q – Noted that there have not been students at Mass when observed, have we made any progress on encouraging attendance at the monthly mass? We plan to make a weekly time for fellowship to create a habit of attendance on a Thursday lunchtime, which will encourage attendance at Mass. It has been tricky, due to being irregular and being at lunchtime. Students tend to priorities relaxing and eating, which is difficult to compete with. We are looking at providing a time early in the year to discuss Mass and its importance to the Catholic faith, and allow people to observe a Mass. We have 99 practicing Catholic students and around the same non-practicing as declared themselves, and we are in contact with them regularly with the opportunities to connect with the Catholic faith. Concern was expressed by governors that we are not in touch with Catholic students at a key age for developing their spiritual life. VH noted that there has been significant work on raising the profile of the Catholic opportunities, and talked through some of the activities that have been taking place. A letter has gone out to all students, parents and carers who are Catholic identifying, about the opportunity for sacrament and reconciliation to offer support for confirmation and/or confession, linking in with Father Thomas. MCz has done significant work to raise his profile within the college. The letter also talked about the other activities available, such as</p>	

weekly lunchtime prayer, monthly mass etc. There is now a mindfulness colouring station outside the chapel. We are looking to create a space that people do not just walk past but can go into. It is early days for impact, but we hope that the increased visibility and use of tools like Instagram, we will have greater participation.

Governors thanked MCz for his work.

Q – Does anything like a Christian Union, or other opportunities for student to socialise around their faith, exist? There is a Christian Union group supported by MCz, which has organised different events. Many of the Catholic students are involved in this. We hope to encourage the sense that there is a group of people with whom students can attend Mass. We have been publicising it, and now need to take further steps to make it more accessible.

Governors noted the success of the, ‘toast and tea’ initiative.

MAH and MCz left the meeting

6.1 S48 Inspection update: MC gave an update. We are now much closer to being ready. Noted that the Head of RE is currently absent. There is a lot of work underway to make it clearer that the college is a Catholic College, while being sensitive to all students and staff.

We have also had a peer reviewer from St Francis Xavier sixth form, who is a serving sixth form college inspector, whose feedback was that we were being too harsh in our inspection framework self-assessment, and that we need to sing our own praises a little more.

MC noted her thanks to the committee, TSc and the team for their hard work.

It was particularly useful to have someone look at us through a college lens, rather than a school lens.

There has also been some discussion around the student union being part of the student voice and RHK is involved in identifying students who will be involved in this.

Next steps in preparation are to discuss further at the governor day, to help governors further prepare. We have already identified staff to be part of the staff panel, and we are identifying students.

It was noted that we can state the absence of the Head of RE, and that meetings will not take place with either MCz or APB in isolation but will include those who have been working in the area.

Governors noted their appreciation of the work that has been going on in this area, as well as an acknowledgement of the fact that this is not down to any individual, but is a collective college activity.

6.3 Destinations update: VH talked through the key points. Noted that the HE figure, the number that have gone to university, is based on the 2025 cohort that went within the year, so added to that will be the students who took a gap. So, the nearly 11% anticipated gap year from last year are within the HE cohort that go through in following years.

The unknown was a key area and the main work that has happened has been restructuring in the team, which has given increased capacity to track destinations etc, with a view to significantly decreasing the unknown destinations. We are now building better systems to avoid having so many unknowns in future years, with a more strategic approach where a destination is unknown to

	<p>prioritise moving them into a priority group for personal guidance meetings.</p> <p>This aims to reduce that figure for future cohorts, and to ensure that they are not becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training). Students may move from programmes to apprenticeships, but this is still positive and it is important to track.</p>	
<p>7. Student Matters</p>	<p>7.1 Student Governor Report: RHK talked through the key points. Noted the RAG week is supporting Bristol After Stroke Charity. We then have further events planned for sustainability week (w/c 23 March) which will include a clothes swap and other activities such as a sustainable fashion workshop and AI and the environment talks.</p> <p>Governors noted that this is an excellent example of Catholic social teaching.</p> <p>7.2 Student Attendance detailed report: VH talked through the key points. Attendance continues to be positive, and there are real achievements to celebrate.</p> <p>The improvements are a community effort. There are 24 Access to level 3 students with the lowest attendance, and we are working to support them. It is important to act quickly as attendance drops to between 75% and 85%.</p> <p>Highlighted the improvements in the identified groups' attendance and the positive work that has been done.</p> <p>7.3 Suspensions and Exclusions: TSc talked through the key points. We would expect to see a spike in the first two terms, with a levelling out after this. Noted that we are very much taking a trauma-informed approach, and discussed the way in which the Catholic ethos of the college supports a positive approach to behaviour management.</p> <p>Q – Do suspensions always off-site, or can they happen on-site? Predominantly off-site, although where this poses a risk to the student, or impacts assessments etc, internal suspensions can be considered.</p> <p>7.4 Children in Care report: TSc talked through the key points. The data is correct and up to date. It is important to note that here is a 4.8% improvement on attendance for children in care this year. Also noted that, with a small number of students, the figures can be easily skewed.</p> <p>Highlighted the high number of children in care intending to attend university.</p> <p>TSc talked through the work being done to support this community of students, and work with external organisations on this. There is some intensive support work being done where it is needed.</p> <p>We are fully compliant with our statutory duties.</p> <p>We are starting to really look at how we can raise aspiration for these cohorts, so we are doing some work with Newton Impact, where they want to examine the experience of care experienced children to advise colleges and schools, as well as influencing national policy. There is also work with UWE around keeping aspirations raised.</p> <p>Discussion around the vision of St Brendan's to be transformative, and that there are many transformative elements in this work, within the ethos of the college. Also noted that children in care are a priority in the new inspection framework, and this work is key.</p>	

	<p>7.5 Student voice report: VH talked through the key points. 28% is an improved return rate. This will go through the tutorial network in future. Responses are largely positive. We ensured that we were able to track students who did not feel settled.</p> <p>There was a deliberate attempt to include questions to support section 48. Results have been shared with the curriculum teams, and they have been able to do more specific surveys to drill down further. Some areas were picked up at the first inset day, with the survey used as a mandate for making changes.</p> <p>Positive feedback and thanks for the way students are supported, were given from a parent perspective.</p> <p>It was noted that there has been an issue with the library running out of space, so there has been work to provide additional space, and at further times.</p>	
8. Safeguarding & Prevent Strategy	<p>8.1 Safeguarding & PREVENT Update Report: TSc talked through the key points. Noted that there has been an increase in reports; colleagues are now sharing more concerns and feeling more confident to do so.</p> <p>Discussion around the issues and dangers with material being accessed online, and the work being done by tutors to address this.</p> <p>Highlighted the project with the DfE and Metropolitan Police, who were impressed with our business continuity plan. This will allow the sharing of best practice at the college, around managing incidents, to be shared.</p> <p>AC noted that she will complete governor training next week.</p>	
9. Policy Reviews	<p>9.1 Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy: MC talked through the key points of the policy. Policy Approved. Proposed MC, seconded MH</p>	
10. Risk Management	<p>10.1 Review of Board of Governors' Risk Register Items [update]: AC talked through the key risks for this committee. Noted that the numbers of Catholics are increasing, and that the plans discussed above should improve engagement.</p> <p>Also noted that student numbers are increasing, and we have discussed section 48.</p>	
12. Report Items to Board of Governors	<p>12.1 Identify Items to Report to the Board of Governors: Enrichment presentation, section 48, safeguarding (counter terrorism work).</p> <p>12.2 Committee Briefing Next Meeting: To have an update on the enrichment activities on the agenda. New inspection framework, as it relates to this committee.</p>	
13. Other Business	<p>13.1 MC noted that the external reviewer recommended some changes to the ratings for the S48 self-assessment: for Catholic Life and Mission, it was suggested this should be a one rather than a two. The provision section should be two, because there is still work to do within RPE delivery. How well do governors monitor Catholic life, he advised a one, collective worship – one, how well do students respond and participate – two, quality of collective worship – one, and how well do governors monitor collective worship – one.</p> <p>So, overall judgements of; Catholic Life and Mission – one, Religious Education – two, Collective Worship – one. This would give an overall rating of a one.</p>	

