



**ST BRENDAN'S CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**  
**Governors' Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Wednesday 13 November 2024**

**Virtual Microsoft Office Teams Meeting (16:00–18:15 hrs)**

**GOVERNORS/MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mark O'Sullivan [Chair], Svetlana Bajic-Raymond, Gareth Beynon, Marian Curran [Principal], Margaret Harlock MBE, Paul Ryan, Aaron Skinner [6]

**ATTENDING:** Stephen Clayson [Vice Principal Curriculum Quality Innovation], Vicki Haigh [Head of Teaching, Learning & Assessment], Leanne Sowersby [Governance Professional].

**APOLOGIES:** None [0]

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

**CIRCULATION:** All Governors, College website

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

ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	AGREED ACTION
<b>1. Welcome</b>	<b>1.1 Welcome:</b> MOS opened with a Prayer.	
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	<b>2.1 Declarations of Interest:</b> The members of the Committee confirmed there had been no change.	
<b>3. Minutes Previous Meeting</b>	<p><b>3.1 Open Minutes Agreement [16 May 2024]:</b> Some typo errors were noted to be corrected. The Minutes were otherwise adopted as a correct and true record and passed for electronic signature and for publication on the website.</p> <p>3.2 Actions: No actions outstanding</p>	
<b>4. Quality Improvement</b>	<p><b>4.1 Self-Assessment 2023/2024:</b> SC talked through the key points.</p> <p>SC highlighted the overview of progress against the improvement targets from the previous academic year. Firstly, around the use of data to inform the use of interventions. This continues to be a priority, both in using the data and ensuring that the quality of the data is robust.</p> <p>We are now 5% shy of national figures. We saw an increase in A and A* grades, but there is still work to be done around high grades including Bs.</p> <p>SC discussed the work being done to ensure students are prepared for the world of work and [partnerships with local employers have increased. The link between enrichment and curriculum provision has strengthened.</p> <p>We have seen an increased proportion of students going on to top universities and to a university in general. There are still things that need to be worked on, including the B grades, and the curriculum and employability piece.</p> <p><b>Q – Is there a figure for the improved attendance?</b> SC believes this is 86%, and our overall student attendance for 2023-24 was 2% above national for 16-18yrs. SC is working with the team to track the impact of lower attendance and which groups, in terms of attendance levels, are the most important to focus on.</p> <p><b>4.2 Quality Improvement Plan [QIP] 2022/23 update:</b> SC talked through the key points.</p> <p>This will be shared with the leadership team, wider team, and the college improvement partner for feedback. SC noted that curriculum reform continues and more detail is expected in January, particularly relating to vocational qualifications. We have a number of courses mapped out that we would be able to offer if we were to lose courses that we currently run.</p>	

	<p>Work continues on attendance.</p> <p>The use of summative and formative assessment will continue to be a focus, looking at assessment and action based on that assessment. Alongside this, we will look at specific groups of students for whom we are developing strategies to address gaps.</p> <p>There are five key priority curriculum areas listed in the QIP. We are ensuring that we focus primarily on these areas. Key middle and senior leaders have taken ownership of these areas.</p> <p>A key area we are evolving is the work of the pastoral team and the way it links with the curriculum team. We are piloting an intervention programme to help students set smart targets and to build bridges between those teams.</p> <p>We are also really looking at the quality of home learning in each curriculum area.</p> <p>There is also work around careers advice and guidance, particularly for EAL and SEN students.</p> <p><b>Q – How are you monitoring the impact of the actions and what are the success criteria?</b> This is very much a headline document. Each area has a separate interventions plan. We have been working to ensure that we are making better use of the data. SC talked through the process of analysing data to identify targets for improving high grades, working with the individual teams to identify students to support to improved grades and the reviews for the work towards this. SC shared a working document showing a review and next steps for students aiming to improve their grades.</p> <p><b>Q – How will you focus on the progress of students and marry the teaching in the class to the outcomes and who is doing this work?</b> We continue to use lesson visits and will have formal lesson observations but are also using a broader range of data such as work samples and student voice. So, we are not relying on one data source and are aiming to triangulate the judgments.</p> <p>The team is SC, VH and some senior and middle leaders.</p>	
<p><b>Committee Briefing:</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>‘BTEC Engineering meeting the skills need’.</b></p> <p>SC gave a presentation overview of the BTEC Engineering Level 3</p> <p><b>Q – What sort of links are being established with employers in the area in relation to placements or possible destinations?</b> We currently have a programme with a firm called Mott Macdonald, but this is an area for development. We have now employed a coordinator for Design Technology to support with this.</p> <p>MC noted that the green engineering element will be a key part of the work.</p> <p>Also noted that staff have been on teacher encounter events and has been developing links through this.</p> <p>Engineering is in cycle two of the curriculum review.</p>	

<p><b>5. Curriculum Teaching Learning &amp; Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>5.1 Student progress:</b> SC talked through the key points.</p> <p>Although the data looks negative, this is because it is benchmarked against ALPS3, which would put us in the top 25% nationally. We recognise that we are aspiring.</p> <p>This is based on an in-class 45-minute assessment and the limitation are recognised. It can be used to identify gaps between groups and sub-groups of students, as well as subjects.</p> <p>There will be a more thorough assessment when Year 13s sit mock exams.</p> <p>SC talked through the groups who are performing less well than their peers. SC noted that applied subjects appear to have lower levels, as they often provide cumulative data as coursework is completed.</p> <p>SC noted that Access to Level 3 courses, applied courses are also performing less well than GCSEs, but these will narrow that gap over time.</p> <p>SC talked through the actions being taken, there is one to one work happening where useful, we have used RAG rating etc.</p> <p><b>5.2 Quality of Teaching and Learning:</b></p> <p><b>Lesson visit:</b> VH talked though the key pints of the report. Noted that we have seen strong progress especially in terms of Business Studies and VH talked through the judgement and actions. VH continued to talk through the lesson visits in other subjects.</p> <p>Noted some of the issues within Economics and that there was a lack of information in handover for the new staff, although they are working through this and things are improving.</p> <p><b>Emerging CPD:</b> VH talked through the report. Inset days will focus on SMART targets and how to set these, as well as monitoring them effectively.</p> <p><b>RPE/RE:</b> VH talked through the report on the RPE update. There is now more consistency in terms of the topics being discussed in different classes. VH also talked through the work being done to raise the profile of RPE and the skills that can be developed through RPE.</p> <p>Key areas are assessment and progress, and being explicit about how learners make progress, and are expressed.</p> <p>MC noted that a KPI is a 10% improvement in positive feedback for RPE and that this has been exceeded.</p> <p><b>Q – What is the confirmation sampling?</b> In this case, as it was VH doing the lesson visits and it was necessary to be strategic and well time managed, VH observed a sample of teachers where there were a number within a subject area. Had issues been identified, VH would have observed more teachers.</p> <p><b>Q – Has there been a change of staffing in law?</b> There is a piece of work ongoing for law. These visits were for the more experience staff. Law does usually achieve good results, but there was a drop last year, within</p>	
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the key groups identified. We had agreed that a change of practice in terms of seeing questions before assessments would happen, and VH suspected, correctly, that this had not been enacted. This is around ensuring that we are responding to drops in achievement. VH talked through the overview. The issues become apparent when looking at a specific cohort, who may need a different approach. There was a further discussion around managing unseen questions, predicting which questions will be asked and overall confidence in the curriculum.

SC noted that there is a far more robust model, including curriculum walk throughs with each team, asking them to show how they would sequence each curriculum in the classroom. This is more robust than simply whether the students are engaged.

**Q – Asked to expand on the ‘granular level’ of student progress and do staff understand this?** This is about looking at the specific groups, rather than looking at typicality in a subject area. Looking student by student, as well as looking at the student as a whole – so looking at attendance alongside prioritising workload etc. There is support needed for staff to look at this on a skill level basis and to use the data to inform planning and curriculum, and to ask the right questions.

This is about staff identifying the specific students who are underperforming and taking appropriate action to address this.

**Q – Student governor asked whether there are sufficient resources to help in study?** Yes, AS talked through some of the resources that are available to students. Discussed unseen questions/essays in Law.

**5.3 Average Class Sizes:** MC talked through the information that has been provided. As the college has grown, class sizes have increased. SFCA class averages are 22-23. The averages for 2022 was 13, in 2023 was 15 and this year is 19.

There was a query around larger class sizes and relating to progress. Some subjects with larger class sizes have good progress, and others less.

**Q – There are some very large History classes – do these fit into classrooms?** Those are what it started as, and they tend to go down with attrition and with students moving between classes and they do fit. Computer Science is 23 and 22, and they can all fit and use a PC. When we started, we did need some additional PCs, but the numbers have settled.

We are also very aware of the workload on teams with the increased class sizes, and have been considering using cover supervisors to ensure that staff have enough time for marking etc.

Governors felt it would be useful to have a regular update on the class sizes for this committee.

There was a further discussion around how the work is set and managed to ensure that students are not disadvantaged. SC noted that staff have been appreciative of the recognition of the marking burden and have

	<p>also been very professional around managing the support they have been given. Governors felt it would also be useful to see some staff voice around this and whether class size is mentioned. There are 1.5 FTE cover supervisors. They are graduates, currently without teaching qualifications.</p>	
<b>6. Principal's Report</b>	<p><b>6.1 Student Recruitment 2024/2025 / 6.2 Student Recruitment/Attendance Report 2023/2024 / 6.3 Student Three-Year Trend:</b> Total applications received is now at just over 1000, enrolled is now 2208, retention overall is 99.5%, 94.8% in terms of enrolled.</p> <p>The most common reason for students not remaining with us, is wanting to go back to their previous school. MC talked through the year on year retention figures, which are looking positive. MC also talked through the current attendance figures.</p> <p>Governors noted the clearer historical information in this report. MC will benchmark against national data for future reports.</p> <p><b>Q – What is happening with Access to Level 3 attendance and will this bring overall attendance down?</b> This year is far more challenging, with a core of poor attenders. There was a core of students who were attending very poorly and have now left. SC will look at the up-to-date figures and report back, as well as key actions.</p> <p><b>6.4 Recruitment of Staff Update:</b> MC talked through the recruitment updates. VH talked through the observations on new staff and noted that there are no ongoing concerns.</p> <p><b>Q – Is there any staff absence which is impacting teaching at the moment?</b> Yes, and the team have been managing this. There are still staff to come on board and some areas where we are still trying to recruit.</p>	
<b>7. Policy Review</b>	<p><b>7.1 Register Marking Policy:</b> SC talked through the key changes. These are primarily procedural and there are no substantive changes. <b>Register Marking Policy approved</b></p>	
<b>8. Safeguarding /PREVENT</b>	<p><b>8.1 Safeguarding/PREVENT Committee Duty review:</b> SC advised that the annual safeguarding updates for all staff have taken place, as well as the National College training which is being completed. The Single Central Record has also been reviewed.</p> <p>Noted that it is important to be mindful of how safeguarding and PREVENT are being managed within the curriculum. There are some areas where it will naturally come up.</p> <p>Discussion around tutorials and whether these are held online or in person. There is significant work done on healthy relationships. One to one meetings are always done within open spaces and students are comfortable making disclosures.</p>	

<b>9. Risk Register Review</b>	<p><b>9.1 Review of Risks Allocated to Committee:</b> MC talked through the updated risks and that these items feed back into the QIP. There will be a data dashboard linked to the QIP that will support this.</p> <p><b>Q – Is the dashboard using commercial software?</b> No, this is likely not the plan and MC and EW have met around managing this.</p> <p>The register will be updated again this term.</p>	
<b>10. Committee Business</b>	<p><b>10.1 External Governance Review:</b> SBR noted that the action plan was shared at the full governing board. <b>LS to go through the plan and identify areas to be allocated to each committee</b></p> <p><b>10.2 Committee briefing next meeting:</b> MOS to agree with the VP in advance of the meeting. MOS noted that this is SC’s final meeting and thanked him for all of this work. SC has enjoyed his time at the college. SrMH would be interested to know how staff feel about CPD, what they find useful / not useful. Discussion around how this could be managed. Potentially the walkthrough process could be an area that we could have feedback on from staff involved. PR could potentially be involved in this.</p> <p><b>10.3 Report topics for Board of Governors:</b> Improvements in results for 2023-24, proposals/summary for QIP for the current year, summary of VH’s report on teaching and learning, feedback on class sizes.</p> <p><b>10.4 Committee Recruitment:</b> SBR gave an update. There are interviews being carried out for Foundation governors and for coopted committee members. Parent elections are also due to take place.</p> <p><b>10.5 Annual Review Committee Terms of Reference:</b> These were circulated and accepted without change.</p>	<b>LS</b>
<b>11. Any Other Business</b>	<p>11.1 MC noted that tomorrow is the final open day of this academic year.</p>	
<b>12. Correspondence</b>	<p>12.1 None</p>	
<b>13. Next Meeting</b>	<p><b>13.1 Date of Next Meeting:</b> Wednesday 26 February 2025</p>	
<b>Minutes Agreed</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting agreed as true and accurate record.</b></p> <p><b>Date: 26 February 2025</b></p> <p><b>Signed: _____ Committee Chair</b></p>	