



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

MINUTES OF MEETING

Wednesday 26 February 2025

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

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

ATTENDING: Melaine Jonik [observing], Vicki Haigh [Head of Teaching, Learning & Assessment], Leanne Sowersby [Governance Professional], Hollie Hovell [CCL for Science]

APOLOGIES: Mark O'Sullivan [1]

ABSENT Without Apology: None [0]

CIRCULATION: All Governors, College website

QUORUM REQUIRED: 3/6 (Voting Committee members)

Committee Briefing:

‘Progress in Science’.

by Hollie Hovel

HH gave a presentation.

MC and the governors noted thanks to HH for her work on managing Science, and the work on the new AAQ – Human Biology OCR, which will replace the BTEC.

Q – Query about ungraded results, why are we ending up with ungraded results? There is usually a story for each individual student. We are currently looking at whether students should be considering sitting AS, rather than A-Level etc, so that students do leave with a qualification, if they are struggling as a result of other factors beyond the students’ control.

Q – Where are the three main challenges between now and the exams? Primarily the retrieval of the content. This has been helped by an extra set of mocks, but there is a need to revisit content to ensure students are confident and can apply knowledge. There is also a need to adapt to the style of the questions, which is changing, and a challenge in terms of time for teachers, in going through the recent papers, as many resources are now out of date. There is an argument for not overloading with detail, and focusing on what will be asked.

We have also started making summary documents addressing how to get marks in exams, and using AI to create resources to help with retrieval.

AS joined the meeting

Q – Do cluster leads have the breakdown of student comments relevant to the subject and is it useful? Yes, and we also delve into some of the questions in lessons, through discussion to identify the resources that work well.

HH left the meeting.

ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	ACTION
1. Welcome	1.1 Welcome: SBR welcomed everyone. MC opened the meeting with Prayer.	
2. Declarations of Interest	2.1 Declarations of Interest: The members of the Committee confirmed there had been no change.	
3. Minutes Previous Meeting	3.1 Open Minutes Agreement [13 November 2024]: The minutes were adopted as a correct and true record and passed for electronic signature and for publication on the website. 3.2 Actions: See actions report - no actions outstanding	
4. Quality Improvement	4.1 Self-Assessment update: MC talked through the key points. This has been sent to Ofsted. We need to consider actions for next year, particularly around SEND and Inclusion. There will also be subject SARs. 4.2 Quality Improvement Plan [QIP] progress update: MC talked through the key points and the RAG rating. MC talked through the red items.	

	<p>The College are still waiting for funding and guidance around the new level three qualifications.</p> <p>It was noted that the Professional Development day, just before Easter, will be focused around the ongoing work to narrow the gap in gender achievement. There has been some pilot training on this, as well as specific work that can be done with male students in particular subjects. There was a discussion about male motivation and the possible reasons for this being less clear.</p> <p>Q – Has there been an analysis on the difference in achievement for male and female? Yes, there is a small gap in both years between male and female. There is work going on to identify the students who need additional support.</p> <p>There was a discussion about comparison with other settings. This can come down to knowing the cohort very well and putting in the support that is needed.</p> <p>MC talked through the amber/yellow items. It was noted that the extended reviews showed that developing consistency between subject areas was an ongoing priority. Effective assessment still remains a QIP priority for next year.</p> <p>MC talked through the green items.</p> <p>4.3 Extended Reviews: MC gave an overview of how an extended review is carried out. These reviews have been carried out as there was an identified need for targeted improvement.</p> <p>MC talked through the key findings of the Business Review, talking through some examples of issues, challenges and action required.</p> <p>Governors noted that the summaries were very useful, and the reviews were clear and easy to follow.</p> <p>Q – How do the staff feel about this, are they moving in the right direction quickly enough? Most, but not all. We are generally seeing staff working hard to follow through on the actions and coming up with solutions. A huge amount has happened over six months. The reviews have helped to identify progress that has been made and developments that still need to happen. VH talked through some of the changes that have been identified and are still being made. We are now working with both year groups, to ensure that we do not have to catch up Year 12, and that we have core resources. We are working on formative checking of knowledge, before testing happens.</p> <p>Q – The review does not mention staffing issues – are these being addressed? At the point of the review there had not been any absence that could not be covered with suitably qualified teachers. However, there is now a level of absence that may need a more creative approach, with two Year 13 groups to cover. Class sharing was taking place to try and pre-empt staff absence.</p> <p>There was a discussion of some of the actions, and of the overall need for all staff to know and understand how to provide quality teaching. There have been some hard conversations over the past year, and there has been a need to catch up last year’s Year 12. Staff are now working well towards this and there has been significant progress.</p> <p>Governors also noted that around 40% of students felt that they have not been taught exam technique.</p> <p>VH noted that, in the most recent student voice, only 9 said that they did not feel that they had support in exam preparation.</p> <p>Updated student voice to come to the next meeting.</p>	
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	<p>MC talked through the Maths review, and noted the historic issues, as well as the progress that has been made in recent years. Governors noted that it would be useful to have these reviews in the same format.</p> <p>Q – What are the books of power? These are aimed at helping students to recall the key formulae and when to use them.</p> <p>Q – Where is the challenge for the top students? Challenge is classed as standardised, medium and high. There was a perception that students were aiming at the standard, and the team were asked how they were pushing students to go for a higher level of challenge. This is an area for improvement. There is an action plan being worked on for this.</p> <p>The work on Maths started last year, so an improvement in outcomes should be seen this year, and the year after.</p> <p>MC talked through the Sociology review.</p> <p>Q – What numbers are studying Sociology? This is the fourth biggest A-Level subject with 160 in Year 12, and 128 in Year 13. This means that question level analysis across the cohort is essential, and the structures to support this are being developed.</p> <p>Q – Why use Educas if the resources are not there? The CCL wanted to change exam board and some modules to be more appropriate for our students. MC had worked with another college to get resources for this.</p> <p>There is a Question Level Analysis within the team, it is about making sure that it is being used consistently, and supporting staff to work with this. AS gave some feedback on his experience in Sociology. The issue is more around the assessment and feedback, and ensuring that students are acting on the feedback that is being given.</p> <p>MC noted that there are some common themes in these reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistency of assessment and feedback. - Differentiation and ensuring challenge for all students, especially for high grades and differentiation. - Resource use and standardisation - Study skills and exam preparation, and consistency. - Home learning monitoring 	
<p>5. Curriculum Teaching Learning & Assessment</p>	<p>5.1 Student progress – projected grades: Mock ALPs measure is 8, The disparity between mock grades and projected grades ALPs performance is variable</p> <p>Key concerns and areas for action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why is there a consistent gap between projected grades and mock grades? - How do we know where students are going to be? - What additional training do teachers need to assess progress accurately? Where is best practice? How is that done well? Where is the learning to be shared? 	

	<p>should be due in Spring or Summer. Key themes to highlight are it is known that there are inconsistencies, and there is a desire to be sure that vocational routes are publicised to all students, whether in a school Post 16, a college or other setting. MC also noted that it is clear that the government wants to improve skills for employability and developing the economy; and that they want transferable skills in critical thinking, teamwork, resilience and financial literacy. This may lead to a PHSE programme in all sixth form provision.</p> <p>MC also talked through the curriculum developments in the college, and the overall strategic plan for protecting its educational character. The report also links it to the local skills need because we need to do this as an FE college, mapping to progression and key economy skills.</p>	
6. Principal's Report	<p>6.1 Student Recruitment 2025/2025: Currently 1121 are enrolled in Year 12, which will be important in terms of the number going through to Year 13.</p> <p>Currently the number of applications is 2424 (last year was 2451), offered is 1651, acceptances are at 1471.</p> <p>We have said that we aim to grow by around 130 students each year.</p> <p>Q – Is retention holding? Yes, from enrolled at 91 and then 95.</p> <p>MC also talked through attendance and noted that 2 years ago 760 students were at 80% or below in attendance, and currently, 590 are below 80% on attendance.</p> <p>Q – Is it possible to do the analysis on attendance without the impact of strike days? Currently attendance is at 89%, on strike days it went down to 85%.</p> <p>Q – What is the national average for FE Colleges? Around 85%, and we are above this.</p> <p>Q – To what extent is the increase in the numbers due to the population bulge, and to what extent due to the attraction of the college? Current student numbers for Year 11 are a little lower. The expansion in student numbers is in the current Years 10, 9 and 8. Transport barriers have been removed, the college offers a wide range of courses and is increasingly attractive to students.</p> <p>6.2 Student Recruitment/Attendance Report 2024/2024: covered above</p> <p>6.3 Student Three-Year Trend: covered above</p> <p>6.4 Recruitment of Staff Update: MC talked through the recent recruitment, and current advertisements.</p>	
7. Safeguarding /PREVENT	<p>7.1 Safeguarding/PREVENT Committee Duty review: There was a discussion around how this links into the curriculum and whether it has been considered at this meeting. VH advised that there will be work in term 6 around how Prevent is covered in the curriculum.</p> <p>There was a discussion around whether students at GB's post 16 study the same subjects as at St Brendan's. GB advised that they do, but there is a smaller offer as it is a smaller sixth form, and many students come to St Brendan's for particular subjects.</p>	
8. Risk Register Review	<p>8.1 Review of Risks Allocated to Committee: MC talked through the key items. All updated items are highlighted in red.</p>	

	<p>The risk around not maintaining the Ofsted grade will be updated, following the pilot and the request from three colleagues to train as Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>There is now a data dashboard to support the understanding of the use of data, as well as an attendance dashboard.</p> <p>There is also a risk around the curriculum and the potential impact on our offer.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the format of the register and the work that is underway to streamline this.</p>	
9. Committee Business	<p>9.2 Committee briefing next meeting: Analysis of Year 12 and Year 13 data. There could be a clearer impact of the Becky Francis review on the curriculum overall. Could also look at a subject that has made significant improvements.</p> <p>1 – Sport, 2 – Becky Francis Review</p> <p>It was noted that the new VP will be in post for the meeting.</p> <p>9.3 Report topics for Board of Governors: Mock exam performance, the analysis of needs of staffing and the correlation of this with the QIP.</p>	
10. Other Business	None	
11. Correspondence	None	
12. Next Meeting	12.1 Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 14 May 2025	
Minutes Agreed	<p>Minutes of Meeting agreed as true and accurate record.</p> <p>Date: 14 May 2025</p> <p>Signed: _____ Committee Chair</p>	