**ST HELENS COLLEGE**

**STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

**MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE HELD AT 11.30am ON FRIDAY 9 JUNE 2017**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERSHIP:**

\* Mrs Elaine Brocklehurst (Chair)

\* Mrs Susan Jee

\* Mr Phil Round

\* Mr John Middlehurst

\* Mr Nick Gribben

\* Dr Jette Burford

\* Denotes present

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mrs Anne Pryer, Principal, Knowsley Community College

Mrs P Jervis, Governor, Knowsley Community College

Pauline Moulsdale (minute taker)

**Appointment of Acting Clerk to the Corporation**

In the absence of Mrs C Jones, Clerk to the Corporation, **Mr** **J Middlehurst** was appointed as the Acting Clerk for this meeting.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were notified.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs Victoria Roberts and Mrs C Jones.

1. **NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON THE 08 MAY 2017**

The minutes of the above meeting were agreed and signed as a correct record.

1. **MATTERS ARISING**

Two reports requested at the previous meeting were received and discussed by the Committee.

1. Page 5 Item 7d) – In-Year WPL Report

**Waterside Apprentices**

The report had been compiled to help explain the differences in performance between College and Waterside apprentices. JB commented that Waterside invest more in frequent visits and apprentices are employed by Waterside.

SJ noted that Waterside offers less frameworks and questioned whether we are offering too many. AP stated that this has been considered and work carried out; a sensible decision had been taken on those to retain and go forward with. The frameworks that will grow to a good size with economies of scale would be considered. It was noted that workloads and caseloads vary between various frameworks; assessors’ caseloads are monitored and are between 40 to 60.

**Action: Victoria Roberts to provide more details on assessors’ workloads at Waterside.**

NG joined the meeting at this point.

The Committee discussed the time spent by Waterside to decide on suitability of a candidate with £25 per student allocated for testing ability and psychometric tests. It was suggested that this should be done proportionally for College frameworks to start people at the right level. JB added that discussions have taken place and skills tests could be re-instated related to the specific subject area. Where these are not available for subject areas, appropriate tests would have to be developed. The value in doing tests should be evaluated.

JM suggested that activities be compared to determine success of a different approach e.g. pre-assessment. Also, that guidelines should be written to be selective of companies who will support the student. PJ questioned if the requirement at Waterside for 5 GCSEs and English and maths on entry could be the difference; requirements in College are very low in comparison.

AP commented that the world of apprenticeships had shifted following the Ofsted inspection and through the levy. It was noted that apprentices on day release do better as they are more structured compared to the area of Health & Social Care where apprentice release is more problematic. This may be addressed by the introduction of the levy process. Feedback would be needed from the Apprenticeship Working Group to decide on way forward.

PR suggested that pre-existing qualifications and assessments could lead to more successful apprenticeships. JM proposed looking at an outstanding Apprenticeship College and determine if they will consider sharing their information.

**Action: VR to identify and look at a College with outstanding Apprenticeship provision.**

1. Page 3 Item 7b) – In Year A-level Progress Report

**A level ALPS Feedback Report**

The report identified cohort sizes and had been based on data from March 2017; students had since sat another paper which would create a shift. The gap would be from March to April/May 2017. It was noted that the Level 3 tracking is a snapshot on progress and the question asked if this should be done more. ALPS sharing to ‘My Alps’ would give more regular updates.

PJ requested that a paper report on predicted A level grades be produced alongside the ALPs report.

1. **AREA REVIEW/MERGER PROGRESS REPORT**

Area Review

Nothing reported for this item.

St Helens College & Knowsley Community College Merger

A brief update was given by JB. The Restructuring Fund application had gone in on time with feedback expected next Friday. The application had been well received; the turnaround time and 26th July 2017 date for a decision were still on track.

The proposed merger date will still be tight.

1. **STRATEGIC MONITORING**
2. **English and maths to ‘Outstanding’ – Danielle Judge**

The report covers a range of English and maths through various cohorts; it covers all classroom-based programmes and refers to apprenticeships but does not include 14-16 students.

PJ suggested that English & maths for 14-16 cohort be included to gauge progress and performance. It was noted that DJ has already started to work on this with the Head Teacher at the 14-16 Academy.

Feedback was given on the attendance at GCSE Exams:

* 3 exams have taken place with 1 English exam remaining.
* Maths had 832 starts; 758 active; 726 sat the first exam; 735 sat at least one paper. 97% attended at least 1 paper. 92.6% attended both papers.
* English had 770 starts; 714 active; 660 sat the exam. Based on the active learners,

attendance at the first exam was 92.4%.

* For GCSE maths, based on attendance at exams and allowing for a few students who sat but will not grade, predictions of realistic achievement of 86% which is 5% improvement on last year and the national rate. Prediction for high grades for maths is 15.9% for Study Programmes, a predicted improvement of over 11% based on last year.
* For GCSE English, based on attendance at the 1st paper, predictions of realistic achievement of 84%, an improvement of over 2% from 2015/16. Predicted high grades is 11.5% which is equal to last year. However, given this is a new specification, staff have been a little cautious in their estimates.
* improvements due to better attendance in class; links with pastoral tutors; Heads of Department engaging and motivating students to attend exams. There has been a culture shift; but still work to do.

Following a discussion on the figures presented by subject and cohort, the Chair asked for a report for prediction by age and subject area by department to be presented to the next meeting of the Committee. Also, an overview of expected and shift in grades in table format.

**Action: Danielle Judge to present reports for English and maths for prediction by age and subject area by department.**

**Action: Danielle Judge to present a report of expected and shift in grades for English and maths in table format.**

In response to a question regarding any actions taken for those students who do not attend exams or only attend for one paper, it was noted that taxis have been sent for students to bring them into College. Heads of Department contact students who miss exams. The Heads have liaised with the Exams Team for special consideration and submission of evidence. It was suggested that perhaps students should be invoiced for the cost of a missed exam. Also that the importance of attending and achieving English and maths should be emphasised at enrolment and throughout the year.

Nick Gribben commented on the excellent work that has been done by the English and maths department. Concerns were raised that some students do not arrive equipped to learn and sit the exam. The providing of equipment for students for the maths exams was recognised by the Committee.

Danielle Judge reported that the application for a grant of £10,000 for maths and English intervention had been successful. It is planned to use this for breakfast clubs, attendance monitoring and enrichment.

1. **Driving Apprenticeships Performance Update – Caroline Lidster**

An overview of the updated report was given with the following noted:

* Completions are up by 0.6% since the previous report; figures are changing on a daily basis.
* Of the remaining apprenticeships to complete, 2 or 3 are possible withdrawals and some in the amber alert and may not be timely.
* Overall:

55 apprenticeships are required to achieve the provider rate;

15 apprenticeships are required to achieve the national rate.

Timely:

32 completions are required to reach the national rate;

37 completions are required to reach the provider rate.

58 are likely to achieve timely after looking at those possibly at risk in the amber alert.

* The forecast given was that the College will meet both national rate and provider rate.
* The focus is on timely completions; the situation is reviewed twice weekly.

In response to a question regarding incentives to those students who are failing, JB explained that although this is utilitarian and may not be fair, it is used to encourage the completion of the framework and helps the student to achieve. It was noted that the cost to College is greater if a student does not achieve than the cost of the incentive. Also, the provision of apprenticeships is not an exact science and requires a balance of many factors.

The reported 100% success of Andy Taylor led to a question about his methods.

CLid explained that he has small groups of 12 with distinct levels in each group. This gives an opportunity for him to work with each student regularly; he also assesses students prior to the start of tuition.

It was **suggested** that the Andy Taylor’s methods and the software used, be shared with colleagues as best practice.

1. **Health & Social Care Grade 3: Progress Report – Clare Webster**

The action plan was presented in light of the recent Ofsted inspection with the following noted:

* There are legacy issues for 2013/14 and 2014/15;
* Health & Social Care came out as strong as it could do;
* It was recognised that there is progression from L3 study programmes on to higher programmes.
* During inspection, either data could not be produced quickly or could not drill down into the information.
* Suggested to devise a standard ‘the SHC way’ so that it can be mapped and built into the SAR.
* Outturn – not much change; started to look at students’ progression for Level 1 and Level 2. For Level 3, there was no Diploma starts in 16/17, so no legacy students. Health & Social Care is developing and looking positive.
* The top level of progression is in line with 14/15 data national rate (latest available). Considered that there was nothing alarming in being under in predictions. L3 under was 71% now 76% but has shown an improvement.

Following a lengthy discussion, the following points were noted:

* PR suggested to benchmark a college that is outstanding at producing relevant data.
* SJ suggested to look forward and wider with ideas for allocating funds presented to the Committee.
* It was **agreed** to continue with the ‘nesting provision’ process. The impact on value added was discussed.
* The Chair acknowledged that investments would be required to develop the dashboard further and asked for this and the underlying information and processes to be discussed at SLT. It was noted that the data comes from Markbook so all staff should use Markbook; CDA need to extract information via a ‘button’ facility that the College does not have.

**Action: SLT to submit a proposal and recommendations to the Committee for the development of extended diplomas and nesting programmes.**

1. **A-Level Academy: Progress Report - Joanne Greenhalgh**

An overview of the progress report was given with the following noted:

* In response to the Ofsted comment regarding A Levels having too many leavers and being unhappy with retention, JG explained that the department is a victim of numbers. There is only a small number of leavers; the issues are discussed in team meetings.
* CPD sessions are planned to inform staff on resilience training for students. ‘Wobble times’ appear during mock exams; an analysis of leavers over the last 2 years will be done to identify reasons for them leaving the course.

The Chair commented that students are still leaving even though the chosen subjects were thought appropriate on enrolment. In response, it was noted that retention has been the same over the 2 years and as such is disappointing. JG reported that the reason for each student leaving was known and recorded; some students have had mental health and anxiety issues. No students have left the course with anti-College issues.

It was considered that the mix of subjects and career bundles on offer may improve the situation. The Committee supported the idea of offering a summer school to those planning to study A Levels.

**Action: Joanne Greenhalgh to look at how a summer school would work and report back to the Committee.**

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The Chair asked for an A Level update report in paper format to show progress and expected grades.

**Action: JG to provide an A Level report in paper format to show progress and predicted grades.**

1. **HIGHER EDUCATION UPDATE – PREPARATION FOR INSPECTION AND CURRICULUM**

Following consideration of the report, the following points were noted:

* JB – The Open University will be used for unusual programmes when it suits; using the right university for the right course for the right reason.
* JB - UCLan are robust, steady and thorough.
* Concerns were raised over some of the statements in the report and the cost involved. NG stated that many factors are yet to be discussed for both business and curriculum issues.
* JB raised a concern regarding the University of Bolton as still need to keep to a small number of partner universities.

Pam Jervis left the meeting at this point.

1. **URGENT BUSINESS (As reported under agenda item 3)**

There were no items of urgent business.

1. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting to be held on 3 July 2017 commencing at 9.00am