

SANDWELL COLLEGE

Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on
Monday 22 January 2024 at 3.30pm

Present: N Makin (Independent) (Committee Chair)
T Kaur (Student Governor – Sandwell)
J Tew (Independent)
G Pennington (Principal)

Apologies: None

In attendance: D Holden Vice Principal, Curriculum
E Scotford Clerk to the Corporation
J Stevens Vice Principal, Quality
Rachael Aston AP, Curriculum & Skills
Nargis Boston AP, Curriculum 16-18 and adults AEB, AP EDI
Sanjiv Parmar AP, Curriculum & Quality
Angela Tombs AP, Student Services

		Action
L24.1	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. There were no apologies. The Committee expressed their thanks to Ken Ellis, the former Committee Chair, for all his hard work. Governors noted that John Tew had taken over from Ken Ellis as Safeguarding Link Governor.	
L24.2	<u>Declarations of any new personal or business interest or conflict with any agenda item</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: There were no new declarations.	
L24.3	<u>Minutes of the LQCC meeting held on 27 September 2023</u>	
	The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record for signing by the Chair.	
	RESOLVED THAT: the minutes be approved.	
L24.4	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
24.4.1	Governors asked that the Programme Standards Review at the next meeting was on High Needs and Special Needs. Clerk to note for agenda.	DH Clerk
24.4.2	Minute No. L23.36.1.6 – report on AS levels to be brought to Governors outlining the opportunities provided to those students who had performed less well – actioned.	
24.4.3	Minute No. L23.36.1.13 – vocational results to be presented – actioned.	
24.4.4	Minute No. L23.36.2.6 – Governors asked that more measurements of impact be developed and included in the QIP/PIAP – actioned.	

24.4.5	Minute No. L23.36.3.2 – Quality Strategy – the College agreed to provide Governors with copies of the template reports that departments were required to complete – actioned.	
24.4.6	Minute No. L23.36.3.5 – the draft approach to the structure of the Quality team would be brought to the next meeting – actioned. Governors asked that the Quality team be invited to present at the next meeting – actioned.	
24.4.7	Minute No. L23.36.4.5 – Safeguarding annual report – Governors asked that an analysis of the incidents involving new students only be undertaken – outstanding.	
24.4.8	Minute No. L23.36.6.4 – Governors to be provided with details of the One World event earlier to maximise attendance – work in progress.	
L24.5	<u>Programme Standards Review – Programme Achievement Managers (PAMs)</u> Presented by: Angela Tombs, Phoebe Taylor and Leon Woodcock	
24.5.1	There were currently 6 PAMs across all sites. They are the Students Champion, there to remove any obstacles to their learning and achievement. They are an integral part of the student services network. Explanation given of the PAMs background, remit and how they achieve this.	
24.5.2	Information about the PAMs can be accessed by all students.	
24.5.3	Impact of the PAMs was explained. The College was growing because of recruitment but also retention helped by the success of the PAMs' work. This also helped the College's financial position.	
24.5.4	Case study highlighted to illustrate successful PAM intervention. PAMs conduct home visits in pairs for safety reasons. Home visits were useful in assessing circumstances around students' needs which might not be obvious at college, e.g. family housing issues, family finances, travel, distance and access. Positive interactions and relationships are built with parents/ carers. This enables effective interventions to be put in place.	
24.5.5	PAMs are the link between pastoral and curriculum areas. There were 1922 active enrolments at Cadbury, an increase of around 100 students from the last academic year. 46 home visits had been conducted, with very positive engagement: 60% of those students engaged well post home visits; interventions remained in place with the remaining 40%. PAMs worked with every student to ensure they were supported while studying with the College.	
24.5.6	Since the PAMs had been put in place at Cadbury there had been a 9% increase in overall attendance which included students with challenges. This demonstrated the College was tackling attendance.	
24.5.7	At Sandwell and Central St Michael's (CSM) 647 follow-up calls had been made to learners who had stopped attending, 98% of whom had returned; 110 home visits had been conducted since September, 89% had returned to their studies.	
24.5.8	The approach to addressing issues with non-engagement with English and Maths were outlined, English and Maths were areas students felt they had failed for years at school so it was difficult for them to engage. 40 home	

	<p>visits had been conducted, with a 100% reconnection success rate.</p> <p>Cadbury specific data was highlighted: 642 students were studying GCSE English/Maths alongside their A-Levels/BTEC courses; November resits results were: 30/162 students passed GCSE Maths (4 grade or above); 81/227 students passed GCSE English (4 grade or above).</p>	
24.5.9	<p>A case study was presented to illustrate the success of PAM intervention around English and Maths.</p>	
24.5.10	<p>PAMs also had a wider remit, with each having responsibility for a different area of PD/ BA, i.e. Mentors, work experience/enrichment; Personal Tutors; SSO's; Student Union; Disciplinarys; attendance.</p>	
24.5.11	<p>Cadbury additional support areas were outlined: Attendance Officers; Personal Tutor; counselling; KRUNCH Mentoring and counselling support; Academic Learning Coaches; Personal Development (Tutorial Programme) covering themes such as: Digital Footprint, Physical and Mental Wellbeing, Critical Thinking and Collaboration; careers related topics and resources embedded into the PD programme.</p>	
24.5.12	<p>Update given of work experience opportunities, which were a Gatsby benchmark, over the past 4 years acknowledging the difficulties in re-engaging businesses across Sandwell and Birmingham since Covid. 2021: 1101, 2022: 1497, 2023: 2283, 2024: Target 3000</p> <p>The College confirmed that a work experience co-ordinator was in place at Cadbury College and CSM.</p>	
24.5.13	<p>Governors noted that work experience figures were moving in the right direction and asked if the College was happy with the quality of the work experience placements.</p> <p>The College confirmed it was and had made many links with business and speakers were in place for departments. Work experience linked into T levels moving forwards.</p>	
24.5.14	<p>Governors noted that PAMs conducted home visits in pairs for safety reasons and asked if they were difficult.</p> <p>The College advised they could be emotionally difficult and the PAMs did not know how they would be greeted but they did not face any aggression as parents/carers realised they were offering support for their child and seeking to remove barriers to learning. Parents/carers and students opened up more in their home setting which enabled PAMs to appreciate students' personal circumstances so they could support appropriately. They managed people well by approaching the visit with an open and positive attitude. The male/female gender pairings worked well and picked up on emotional intelligence. This worked well with male and female students.</p>	
24.5.15	<p>Governors congratulated the College on how thorough and joined up the processes were and appreciated putting support in place for students quickly was as important as the standard of their teaching and learning.</p> <p>The College stressed that no learner was left behind and they had a good network of support.</p>	
24.5.16	<p>Governors reminded of Ofsted's reference to the PAMs being part of the character of the College and its student-centred approach.</p> <p>The College confirmed that supporting student retention was part of its growth strategy and its philosophy of ensuring that every student was given every chance to succeed.</p>	

24.5.17	<p>Governors asked if there was a particular time of year when the College was at more risk of losing students when there was more call on PAMs.</p> <p>The College explained the enrolment process was good and tightly managed so the first 6-8 weeks of term were not an issue but the likelihood increased around October half term and after Christmas. PAMs were involved in recruitment across all sites so students knew them and how to approach them. This meant they could support students with their various concerns which could include doubts about the courses they had chosen or the transition from school.</p>	
24.5.18	<p>Governors asked what characteristics and experience a PAM required, recognising they needed to be fast acting, understand the education sector, understand pastoral care and social circumstances of young people, was it a vocation or did it attract staff from other areas of the College who might want to work in the role for a couple of years and then move back into teaching.</p> <p>The College explained they all had experience of the curriculum and had teaching experience; were resilient and were team players; they were committed to removing barriers for students' learning.</p>	
24.5.19	Governors thanked the PAMs for all their hard work, recognising they created aspirations and confidence in the students	
24.5.20	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received a presentation on the PAMs.	
	PAMs left the meeting	
L24.6	<u>GCSE November results</u> English and Maths	
24.6.1	Compared to all FE and West Midlands colleges, the College was ahead in both English and Maths.	
24.6.2	The November results for those who had achieved Grade 4 and above for the last 4 years were outlined: increasing from 98 for English and 72 for Maths in 2020; to 193 for English and 93 for Maths in 2023.	
24.6.3	The College's strategy for English and Maths resits involved: robust diagnostic assessment which commenced immediately after enrolment; a bespoke 6 week November resit programme, split into 2 cohorts – there would be a whole group resit in the summer for those not achieving Grade 4 or above in November; termly curriculum review to breakdown by topic where students were struggling to inform their ILPs and mentor support; revision programmes ran every evening from 4.00pm-5.00pm and tracked students' progress, keeping parents in the loop and parents evenings held in November and March; celebration and awards ceremonies took place for the November resit results announced in January.	
24.6.4	<p>Students were automatically enrolled on the Functional Skills programme with high fliers completing a BKSB assessment, an online platform, and then fast tracked to GCSE as their skill level was high. Functional Skills were in demand as those who pass L1 Functional Skills by November could join the GCSE team ready for the summer exam.</p> <p>Some students turned 19 during the course, so were then classed as adult learners, but the College continued to support them.</p>	
24.6.5	Governors recognised the difficulties the College faced in English and Maths as it was dependent on the students inherited and the skills they arrived with so there was a need to undertake remedial work with them.	

24.6.6	<p>Governors asked what else the College could do to improve still further given it was so far ahead of other colleges and had it set itself a target to achieve.</p> <p>The College confirmed it continually strived to build on its success in English and Maths and the positive impact this had on students' lives. Support from the PAMs was exceptional and had grown over the years as well as pastoral support for students and dedicated officers in the GCSE team. The College outlined how it sought to continually improve by: being in regular contact with students; liaising with their parents; being very flexible in changing their timeslot as some students worked part-time; some students' home life was challenging; the College worked closely with the Functional Skills team to identify high fliers which, at present, took 3 weeks after enrolment which could perhaps be reduced to 2 weeks; the team could work even more closely with Functional Skills team to increase the results.</p>	
24.6.7	<p>Governors asked how the Parents Evenings in November and March worked in practice.</p> <p>The College advised that it had sent 1300 invitation letters to parents for next week's parents evening. It would be positive if 70-80 parents attended. The College already had a plan in place for every student. The College offered Parents Evening attendance by phone and Zoom but this had not been successful in the past due to parents' IT skills. Everything was recorded on the tracking system. Departmental Heads had also held English and Maths specific Parents Evenings.</p>	
24.6.8	<p>Governors asked what specific support parents were asked to provide at home.</p> <p>The College provided tips to parents, examples were: asking simple questions about what they have learnt and their general wellbeing; supporting them by lending them their own computer if they did not have one to complete homework.</p>	
24.6.9	<p>Governors noted figures looked good for November and were promising for the summer.</p> <p>The College recommended Governors look at percentages, as volumes were more important: in November almost 400 achieved their GCSE qualification who had previously failed it multiple times which would make difference to their lives. This would show in the College's progression figures.</p>	
24.6.10	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received and monitored the GCSE November results.	
	SP left the meeting	
L24.7	<u>Draft College SAR</u>	
24.7.1	<p>The slight change to the format of the SAR to now include a Forward at the beginning, was explained. Key areas for strengths and development were based on the Ofsted report.</p> <p>Achievement figures were good across all provision types and were above National Average (NA). College data was improving, all in all reflecting a very positive picture.</p> <p>The College had reflected on Ofsted's comments and continued to improve the areas they identified.</p>	

24.7.2	<p>Governors welcomed the new SAR format which was very accessible and documented well life in the College and the impact it had on students.</p> <p>Governors asked what happened to the SAR now.</p> <p>The College clarified that the requirement to upload it to the portal had now been removed. Ofsted would ask for the latest SAR as it assisted discussions around quality. It would be circulated to all staff so they could provide their own context as to where they contributed to the success of the College.</p>	
24.7.3	<p>Governors commented that the skills section was helpful in putting the SAR in the context of the broader economy.</p> <p>The College recognised the need to focus on its current position and future destination. It had addressed apprenticeships as highlighted in the Ofsted report. The next meeting would include a report from Ian Smith on how apprenticeships had improved since the last SAR.</p>	DH/JS
24.7.4	<p>Governors referred to the skills agenda and asked if there was tension with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) who had now taken over responsibility for it.</p> <p>The College reassured there was no tension. The WMCA was a funding organisation and the College's work was not their concern, apart from them allocating funding to certain types of provision. The College had worked hard to ensure it was delivering to the WMCA's requirements. Relationships were improving. The College was mindful of the need to align and tailor its provision to the regional and national economy to assist with the skills agenda.</p>	
24.7.5	<p>Governors asked if the demographics and economic factors had been put into the local context by the College.</p> <p>The College reminded how the Board had been forward thinking, e.g. capital investment in developing the new Engineering Centre in West Bromwich - engineering was still widely undertaken in the country. This demonstrated the College aligned to the skills agenda in the region. Holistically, it was developing its curriculum to match these requirements.</p>	
24.7.6	The SAR would be updated as the year progressed.	
24.7.7	RESOLVED THAT: The Committee would recommend approval of the College SAR to the Board.	
L24.8	<u>Quality update</u>	
8.1	Induction/term 1 student survey	
8.1.1	The format of the term 1 induction student survey was explained. The Quality team conducted the survey in person during the first few days of learners' induction and collated the responses.	
8.1.2	<p>Learners scored the quality of their induction high but for those who had a less positive experience of their induction, the Quality team would follow up within the individual on the same day. Their comments would be fed back to the Curriculum Head to be addressed.</p> <p>Governors were pleased that follow-up action was immediate.</p>	

8.1.3	Some learners had to be reminded of the online platform they could engage with to find answers to many queries. In particular, Cadbury learners were not accessing the platform swiftly. This had been addressed by Cadbury teachers and learners now knew how to access the platform as a first point of call for information.	
8.1.4	The effectiveness of the induction process had assisted in the high retention of learners.	
		TK arrived
8.1.5	Governors asked how the College would be able to ensure learners were on the right course. The College explained this report was focused on the induction survey, the next report would include more information around curriculum reviews and learners' aspirations and next steps.	
8.1.6	Governors asked if the College shared the induction survey results with students The College confirmed that the results were shared with managers and teams but not students. The College reported information to learners in a visual format via 'You Said, We Did' posters.	
8.1.7	In response to a Governor's query as to how many Quality team members involved in the surveying of 510 learners, the College advised there were 4.	
8.2	Observations of Teaching and Learning - Half Yearly Report	
8.2.1	Observations commenced at the start of November and the report detailed those completed to date. A series of activities would be completed by the Quality team as part of that work with the Department Heads.	
8.2.2	The key areas which would continue to be strengthened were: recording and using written feedback - verbal feedback was strong, further work was needed to develop written and summative assessments; curriculum target setting - departments focus on knowledge and skills development rather than criteria and completion of tasks, driving students progress. Moving forwards key areas would be not just apprenticeships, skills division and adult provision but all provision types and supporting departments to embed those quality approaches; as well as ongoing support for teachers to develop their teaching practice and innovative approaches.	
8.2.3	Governors asked what was the programme going forward. The College advised that the remaining departments were scheduled and ongoing, with the last one planned for end April. When curriculum reviews were finished, they would flow into updating the SAR and college QIP. Work already in progress included creating an internal development plan, as well as interviewing for teaching and learning (T&L) coaches, with some advanced professionals to support the improvement drive.	
8.2.4	Governors asked if there would be a further update when the programme had been completed. The College explained this was the first term the development plan had been put in place. There was also have departmental areas of work in progress with themes specific to their curriculum area and mapped to what	

	was most important for the learner and would have most impact. This would be aligned back to the SAR and Department Improvement Plan. The Principal chaired the Strategic Review Group which pulled together all elements from the reviews, from data and surveys. Curriculum Managers were required to make a presentation on their area, its quality and how it would improve going forwards, and be questioned by the Principal and Vice Principals.	
8.2.5	Governors were pleased to note the curriculum reviews and the number of checks and balances in the College to support the College SAR.	
8.2.6	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the quality update.	
L24.9 NFP	<u>Safeguarding update</u>	
L24.10	<u>Risk Register – committee responsibilities</u>	
24.10.1	Governors noted and monitored the new format report.	
24.10.2	Governors queried the target and current risk scores, some of which seemed out of kilter, e.g. curriculum innovation. The College explained that the new format was still being embedded but reassured that, in relation to curriculum innovation, much work had taken place to mitigate the risk.	
24.10.3	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received and monitored the Committee's responsibilities in the Risk Register.	
L24.11	<u>EDI Report</u>	
24.11.1	The format of the annual report was explained and provided an overview of what was working well. An EDI calendar had been compiled from students' feedback of what they wanted to be included and what was most useful to them, based on the different characteristics of EDI. All events were planned in advance to maximise student involvement. The impact of the events on students were compiled.	
24.11.2	The College was legally required to ensure students received and understood Prevent training. A very successful event had been run. Example given of how this had helped ensure no involvement of the College's students in a local incident when a Hindu fundamentalist had been due to give a talk against Muslims. Explanation given of how the College and local leaders had managed the situation. Leaders worked together. Teachers were skilled in encouraging classroom debate where students could express their feelings and how this might impact on them. The result was the talk took place, people came from outside to be part of the march but no students were involved. Ofsted mentioned the success of the College's Prevent training, its delivery and how it worked for its students and led a feeling of inclusivity by ensuring all students had a voice, felt included and heard.	
24.11.3	The College listened to and put on training on topics which concerned students including gender equality and sexual harassment.	
24.11.4	The College had been asked to showcase the success of its EDI work with other colleges, e.g. Halesowen. Other colleges want to understand how the College avoided tension between different groups of students. Its teachers were well equipped to listen, encourage open debate and embed ideas in the curriculum, e.g. the Fashion Department was working on genderless fashion; students were working with the Birmingham Pride Festival to	

	ensure the College was part of the community.	
24.11.5	Departmental breakdown of achievement levels across ethnicities was presented. Indian students performed better than other minorities at the College. White males did not achieve as well as other groups. Action plans would be put in place for any ethnic groups at risk to reduce any gaps in the departments. Student comments would be regularly assessed and there would be communication with parents. The College was effective in representing all students and its marketing materials and its cultural celebrations represented all cultures, with no bias. All materials are carefully chosen to ensure everyone felt included. Testimonials and success stories were wholly inclusive.	
24.11.6	Heads and managers were aware of issues in the College's communities as they served on external groups and supported people from all socioeconomic backgrounds. College staff were aware that in some cultures, parents were less used to and skilled in motivating their children so a piece of work was planned to address this. Outreach work helped to identify at risk students. The College ensured it used content on social media appropriate for its students. The College ensured its employers understood its vision and aimed to decrease the skills gap between its diverse communities.	
24.11.7	Governors commented it was important to find and address any generalisations in groups as behind them there was an individual student with particular circumstances and academic performance could be influenced by combination of factors. Socioeconomic support was important.	
24.11.8	Governors highlighted that the College was visibly one college, as demonstrated by the One World event.	
24.11.9	Governors noted that the College was working with colleagues in other colleges to discuss their approaches and issues, and understood that there could be strong tensions between different community and cultural groups. NB was a member of a local colleges' EDI group which shared current EDI challenges and approaches taken, e.g. Palestine. As the College's teachers and Heads were so well equipped and inclusive in their ideas they could provide a safe space for students to speak about their feelings and discuss matters and concerns without judgment, issues did not become college-wide as they had been managed at classroom level so did not disrupt day to day running of the College.	
24.11.10	Governors noted there were ethnicity gaps in apprenticeships. The College acknowledged there was a skills gap and all apprentices were white. The new AP for Skills was working on this and engaging with employers to make their induction events inclusive to attract students and target them to suit the individual. The College recognised the need to engage more with employers to change their mindset.	
24.11.11	Governors asked if there were plans to include staff EDI data and information into this report or if it would continue to be reported separately in the HR report. The College advised there was plans for a segment in the report to report on staff EDI. The HR team were members of the EDI group and the staff voice was very much included in all groups.	
24.11.12	Governors thanked NB for a thorough report.	
24.11.13	RESOLVED THAT: Governors received the EDI report.	

L24.12	<u>Policies</u>	
	There were no policies to review/approve.	
L24.13	<u>Any Other Business</u> There was no other business.	
L24.14	<u>CONFIDENTIAL</u> L24.9 Safeguarding	
L24.15	<u>Date and Time of Next Meeting</u> Currently Wednesday 22 May 2024, 3.30pm, on site Date to be changed due to apologies received.	

The meeting ended at 5.35pm