



education
training
collective

Standards Improvement Committee Minutes

Meeting held on Thursday 13th February 2020 at 5.30pm in Room 301, SRC Teesdale

Members present: Sam Beel (Staff Governor, by phone), Phil Cook (Chief Executive and Group Principal), Dot Smith, Mark White and Gary Wright

In attendance: James Ruddock (Staff Governor and Group Student Recruitment Manager)

Officials: Liz Boynton (Group Director of Quality), Lesley Graham (College Principal SRC), Phil Hastie (Group Executive Director Planning and Infrastructure), Patrick Jordan (Year 12 Manager), Mark Moore (Group Head of Student Services), Mandy Morris (Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development), Judith Myers (Year 13 Manager), Ben Robinson (College Principal Bede), Sarah Thompson (Clerk to the Corporation) and Sam Young (Governance Support Officer)

Apologies: Ken Bowes-Dalton (Co-opted member)

The meeting started at 5.40 pm.

SIC20/1 Agenda Item 1 – Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Standards Improvement Committee meeting held on 7 November 2019 had been circulated and were **approved** as an accurate record.

Members considered the actions arising from previous meetings and noted those completed. The Chief Executive updated members on the planned meeting on experiences of workplace reporting at Bede; he had now scheduled a meeting with the Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development and the Group Head and Deputy Group Head of Student Services to discuss progress against Gatsby benchmarks. In terms of Standards Improvement Committee membership, the Chief Executive reported that he was following up a possible co-opted member with a background in school performance. It was also noted that James Ruddock's appointment to this committee would be recommended to Corporation at their next meeting.

SIC20/2 Agenda Item 2 – Curriculum Deep Dive

The Group Director of Quality gave an overview of the Developmental Deep Dive process as outlined in her previously circulated report. She explained that deep

dives on curriculum areas reviewed all aspects, including recruitment, student induction, teaching and training, Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and destinations. The initial focus was on developing managers' skills; progress against actions identified during the developmental deep dives would be reported and monitored through the performance review (PR) process at department level. She would also report on progress to this committee through the Quality Update.

Members welcomed the Year 12 and 13 managers to the meeting. The managers outlined how the developmental deep dive process had been implemented at Bede and highlighted the outcomes and actions identified. To date, deep dives had taken place in AS/A2 Psychology and L3 Health & Social Care. For managers, the process had been intensive, with scrutiny into the whole student journey and an emphasis on talking to students in classrooms rather than simply observing lessons. As a result, teaching staff had gained valuable experience of the inspection process, understood better the focus of the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and felt more confident about what to expect during an inspection. Both managers had been reassured that the main themes they had recognised in terms of good practice and areas for improvement were the same as those identified by the external consultants. The action plan for A Level Psychology had been circulated with the meeting papers and the managers highlighted that the process had brought clarity on effective strategies for improving value added. [Redacted] Quadrant analysis had been introduced as a progress monitoring tool and allowed teaching staff to target interventions on key groups; the model was shared with members. The Year 13 Manager confirmed that teaching staff would review student progress monitoring at four points in the year using Alps Connect (an online progress monitoring tool). This process gave teaching staff an analysis of whether specific interventions were delivering the expected impact on value added over time.

A member asked whether the quadrant analysis methodology was appropriate for vocational students and the Year 12 Manager felt that, although it could be used, the tool was less appropriate than on academic programmes. In response to another member's question, the Year 12 Manager confirmed that improving knowledge of and engagement with Alps Connect by both teachers and managers was included in the action plan for all courses at Bede. The Year 12 Manager confirmed that the next developmental deep dive at Bede would be in Public Services.

A member asked about the rationale for the Amber RAG (red, amber, green) rating for A Level Psychology and the Group Director of Quality outlined the criteria for Gold (outstanding), Green, Amber and Red ratings; as part of the Performance Review (PR) process, progress against actions would be monitored and RAG ratings adjusted accordingly. The Year 12 Manager confirmed that, although none of the areas for improvement identified had been unexpected, the deep dive process had developed specific actions required in order to drive improvements.

In response to a member's question on the choice of deep dive curriculum areas, the Group Head of Quality explained that Health and Social Care in particular was one of the largest provision areas for Etc. A member asked about the process for feedback to staff. Both managers explained that all staff had received a copy of the action plan through staff meetings and that staff had seen the process as developmental and felt that appropriate deadlines had been set for the actions identified. In terms of comparisons with the Graded Observation of Learning, Assessment and Progress (GOLAP) process, both managers agreed that, though more intensive, staff felt that deep dives centred on the whole learner journey, rather than just single lesson observations, and that this would strengthen departmental cohesion.

A member suggested that, in order to aid communication within departments and in light of the Group's environmental priorities, standardised folders could be used on Teams or Sharepoint. The Group Director of Quality confirmed that managers already used electronic, rather than paper, information and the Year 12 Manager confirmed that the external consultants had also used electronic information during the developmental deep dives. The Group Director of Quality would consider whether efficiencies could be gained from the use of standardised folders.

In response to a member's question, the Year 12 Manager agreed that the information from deep dives had proved valuable and that this was already informing curriculum planning for the following year. The Group Head of Quality added that the deep dive programme was identifying systemic strengths and weaknesses across the Group and mirrored the approach taken in Ofsted EIF inspections.

The Chair highlighted that she had spent that afternoon with the Group Director of Quality and three curriculum managers and could confirm that managers approached the developmental deep dive process with positivity and derived benefit from the feedback from both the Group Head of Quality and the external consultants. The Group Head of Quality agreed that the process developed managers' skills and confidence and was building capacity for the future.

Members **noted** the report and thanked the Year 12 and 13 managers for their presentation.

SIC20/3 Agenda Item 3 – Ofsted Update

The Group Director of Quality gave a verbal update on inspections under the new Ofsted EIF. Eighteen General Further Education (FE) college inspection reports had been published up to the end of January 2020, with 50% of those that had had full inspections rated good or better; including short or converted inspections, this percentage increased to 60%. To date, 20 reports on full inspections had been published, with the percentage of those rated good or better reduced to 45%.

Members **noted** the update.

SIC20/4 Agenda Item 4 – Destinations 2018-19

The Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development spoke to her previously circulated report. Destinations data for 2018-19 showed a positive outturn against the previous year in terms of recorded positive destinations across the Group; a breakdown by site had been included in the appendix. She highlighted phased work on improving the collection of data across the Group into an internal progression and destination collection system (PDS); phase 2 would be completed shortly and would enable recording of careers interviews with students and include fields to provide information to support Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) requests. The final phase would enable reporting on destination data for all short employability courses and sector based work academies.

In response to a member's question, the Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development confirmed that the goal was to have a single system recording starting points, careers interventions and destinations, and in particular sustained destinations, for all learners. Currently leavers' intended destinations were recorded by tutors and reviewed on exit but, through PDS, an automated email system to capture actual destinations was under development. Departmental staff also contacted those leavers for whom no destinations data was recorded by phone in order to reduce the percentage of unknown and negative destinations.

A member asked about the process for ensuring destinations data was then used by departments for curriculum development and the Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development explained that the Business Planning (BP) cycle triangulated information from destinations data, deep dives and performance review. The Group Head of Student Services added that destinations data for the previous year was included in the templates for BP1 meetings held each March.

The Careers Link governor commented that he had met with the Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development the previous day; he then asked if there were safeguarding issues with respect to learners with unknown destinations, particularly those identified as vulnerable. The Group Head of Student Services explained that

inter agency work and the use of Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) helped to ensure appropriate safeguarding for vulnerable learners leaving the college during the year or at the end of their courses. The Group also provided details of those identified as not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to the relevant local authority.

The Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development confirmed that the Destinations Group Improvement Plan (GIP) had recently been approved at a Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting and the Governance Support Officer agreed to upload it to the Knowledge section of BoardPacks.

Members **noted** the update.

Patrick Jordan and Judith Myers left the meeting.

SIC20/5 Agenda Item 5 – Quality Update 2019-20

The Group Director of Quality spoke to her previously circulated report. To date, 18 developmental deep dives had taken place; the Teaching and Training Development Manager continued to provide support to new probationary staff and individual staff identified as in need of support.

A member asked if college principals received the same quality of information from deep dives as they had from graded observations. The College Principal SRC felt that the information was much more robust than the snapshot provided by GOLAPs and the College Principal Bede agreed and added that new staff were supported by developmental observations and mentoring.

In terms of student retention and apprenticeship achievement rates most measures were RAG rated Green when compared to this point last year, the last published national rates (NR) (2017-18) and the 2019-20 targets outlined in the Master Target File. Data was audited by curriculum managers as a complementary activity to developmental deep dives and sampled by the Quality Team.

A member asked about the impact of CPD and improved guidance to staff on the completion of attendance registers. The Group Director of Quality confirmed that improvements had been seen and that the Group Assessment and Standards Development Manager continued to monitor the accurate marking of registers, including use of the N code (reason for absence not yet provided). She agreed to report further on this at the next meeting.

Members **noted** the update.

SIC20/6 Agenda Item 6 – Group Improvement Plans 2019-20

The Group Director of Quality confirmed that all six GIPs had now been agreed by SMT and that progress on five of them had been reviewed in January, with all making at least reasonable progress. The next full update to GIPs was due post-PR6, for review by SMT in March.

In response to a member's question on how the impact of the Instructional Leadership GIP would be assessed, the Group Director of Quality explained that developmental deep dives would bring real value in terms of assurance of its impact. The Chair welcomed the ongoing scrutiny of GIPs through the PR process and SMT reviews and highlighted the role of this committee as part of that oversight.

Members **noted** the update.

SIC20/7 Agenda Item 7 – Pastoral Care Update

The Group Head of Student Services spoke to his previously circulated report that outlined progress made across the Group on students' personal development, behaviours and attitudes, and the use of ILPs. In terms of personal development, delivery of the tutorial programme had been reviewed through learning walkthroughs; the impact of tutorial work, particularly in terms of students' knowledge of safeguarding, had been covered at learner forums. A newsletter, shared at the recent Governors' Workshop, had been introduced to raise awareness of safeguarding issues. Completion of ILPs by both staff and learners had increased since last reported and, although the percentage of out of date SMART targets was slightly higher, this reflected that formal progress reviews were currently due. Issues with completion rates for both the November formal progress review and One to One meetings with tutors in Autumn term 2 would be highlighted to college principals and heads of department at PR.

In response to a member's question, the Group Head of Student Services explained that there could have been some progress review meetings undertaken by tutors that had not been recorded on Pro-Monitor. Training for tutors had been provided by the Deputy Group Head of Student Services and the Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development added that the system providers, Advanced, were investigating some reporting issues. The College Principal SRC added that, at a well-attended learner forum held that day, all students had confirmed that One to Ones and group tutorials had been taking place. It was agreed that an update on whether the data reflected reporting issues or non-delivery would be considered at the next meeting.

A member commented on the value of the update and the range and volume of pastoral care activities taking place and asked about the wide variation in

participation in tutorial and enrichment activities. The Group Head of Student Services explained that student involvement was still under-reported in ILPs and therefore the data did not yet accurately reflect attendance. The Chief Executive added that the impact of tutorial and enrichment would be seen in how well students could articulate their understanding of, for example, county lines during deep dives and at learner forums. Members felt it would be useful for governors to be invited to attend learner forums.

With relation to Gatsby Benchmarks progress, a member questioned the reasons for the lower achievement rate for RCC in terms of Benchmark 1: A stable careers programme and wondered whether this had been impacted by 19+ retention rates. The Group Head of Student Services explained that the Gatsby Benchmarks were aimed at 16-18 learners but that, as there was currently no Careers Co-ordinator in post at RCC, evidence towards review targets was not being consistently recorded.

Members agreed that all actions relating to information requested for inclusion in Pastoral Care updates had now been completed.

Members **noted** the update.

Mark White left the meeting.

SIC20/8 Agenda Item 8 – Higher Education Update

The College Principal SRC, also Strategic Lead for Higher Education (HE), spoke to her previously circulated update on HE provision across the College Group, including an update on areas for improvement identified in the HE Self Evaluation Document (SED). The number of students enrolled on HE courses delivered in partnership with Teesside University had been slightly below the target set at BP3 [redacted]. New course development for 2019-20 had been completed in line with the HE action plan; further programmes were in development for September 2020 and six programmes were scheduled to be rewritten this academic year. Learner Survey 1 showed an increase in student satisfaction of 3% on the previous year to 94% but focus groups had been scheduled with students on two courses with a decline in satisfaction rates. Initial internal destination data for 2018-19 leavers was positive and the quality of HE provision remained strong though recruitment remained an area of focus.

A member asked whether addressing the issues identified through learner voice activities would increase HE recruitment. The College Principal SRC confirmed that she had discussed long term plans for HE facilities at both SRC and RCC with the Chief Executive but that greater student numbers would be needed to justify increased expenditure. Increased marketing activity would be targeted on two key

areas for growth – Engineering at RCC and Performing and Production Arts at SRC. Members agreed that, in general, recruitment to HE courses delivered through FE colleges had decreased but that, through better strategies for reaching target groups and increased marketing in key areas for growth, there was potential for increased recruitment given the quality of HE provision currently offered.

Members **noted** the update.

SIC20/9 Agenda Item 9 – Governor Teaching and Training Walkthroughs

The Group Director of Quality confirmed that, to date, four governors had undertaken learning walkthroughs at SRC and Bede with either herself or the Group Teaching and Training Development Manager and that further walkthroughs were planned, including one at RCC. Review of the developmental deep dive and observation processes would provide governors with significant insight into quality assurance and improvement processes across the College Group.

Members **noted** the update.

SIC20/10 Agenda Item 10 – Any Other Business

The Group Vice Principal Curriculum and Development updated members on the Group's intention to submit an expression of interest in delivering the new T Level pathways available for 2022-23; the required delivery level had been reduced from 100 to 10 qualifying students for each T Level subject area. She confirmed that she and Becky Wolfe would be making a presentation on industry placements at the upcoming National Apprenticeship Service event in Newcastle and agreed to report on this at the next meeting.

SIC20/11 Agenda Item 12 - Approval of Documents for Public Inspection

It was **agreed** that the agenda and approved minutes would be made available for public inspection. All other items were deemed to be confidential.

SIC20/12 Agenda Item 12 - Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 14 May 2020 at 5:30pm at SRC Teesdale

SIC20/13 Agenda Item 13 – Key Themes

The following key themes were identified:

- Considered developmental deep dive process, including presentation from manager perspective (Bede Sixth Form Managers)
- Review of destinations data collection and future plans

- Review of in year quality position including retention and attendance
- Pastoral Care update, including tutorial programme
- Higher Education update

(The meeting ended at 7.28 pm)

Approved at a remote meeting

Date: 14th May 2020