

*Minutes of the Meeting of Queen Mary's College Students, Staffing and Standards
Committee held on Tuesday 23rd November 2010 at 6.15pm at the College*

GOVERNORS PRESENT:

Ms S. Cordery – *Chair*
Mrs. S. Hanson – *Vice Chair*
Dr. A. Boucher (from 6.24pm)
Mr. G. Fudge – *Student Governor*
Mr. S. Hallam – *Student Governor*
Mr. A. Harding – *Chair of the Board*
Mrs. A. Kent
Mr. I. Kershaw
Mr. D. Robotham (from 6.20pm)
Mr. S. Sheedy – *Principal*

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms A. Foss – *Assistant Principal: Partnerships, Progression and Quality*
Mr. J. Eady – *Clerk*

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. M. Edwards – *Governor*, Mr. M. Livesey – *Staff Governor*, Dr. E. Minns – *Governor*, Mr. P Broom – *Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality Improvement* and Ms S. Russell – *Director of Curriculum 14 – 19 Development*. Dr. Boucher had sent a message to notify that she would be late arriving.

2. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting:

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 16th September 2010, were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting:

4.1 (Minute 9) – Update on Enrolment:

Ms Foss said that this would be covered in the attendance and retention review at the end of the meeting.

4.2 (Minute 10) – Grievances and Disciplinary Procedures:

It was noted that the revised Grievances and Disciplinary Procedures were approved by the Full Governing Body on 6th October 2010. Mr. Kershaw, who had helped with the draft of this document, said that it did not include procedures for senior postholders. He understood that this would be added on the return of the Director of Human Resources from maternity leave.

5. Election of Vice Chair:

Following a nomination from Mr. Kershaw, seconded by Mr. Harding, Mrs. Hanson was unanimously re-elected as Vice Chair of the Committee.

6. Report from the Student Governors:

6.1 Student Protest March in London:

Mr. Fudge said that he had attended this event with about 100 other students from the College. All of these protested peacefully and were not involved in the violence at Millbank House. Mr. Hallam said that, although he disapproved of the violence, he understood the anger that some students felt in having so little influence on decisions which would have much impact on their future. A petition against the proposed rise in university fees had been signed by about 350 students and sent to Mrs. Maria Miller – the M.P for Basingstoke. A separate petition on the Education Maintenance Allowance plans was being considered.

6.2 Children-in-Need Appeal:

A “pyjama day”, held in support of this appeal, had raised £143 and 1.15 Euros.

6.3 Students’ Union Constitution:

Mr. Hallam informed Governors that the Students’ Union Committee was planning to update the constitution and include a communications officer in the committee membership. There were also plans to involve more students and strengthen the tutor-base representation arrangements.

6.4 Driving Safety Week:

This had been held early in November and had been very effective.

6.5 “People and Planet” Group:

Governors were informed that this group of students were supporting an animal rights campaign.

6.6 New Student Intake:

In response to questions, the Student Governors said that the new students were settling in very well and were keen to be involved.

It was agreed that agenda items 7 and 8 would be interchanged and that agenda items 10 and 11 would also be interchanged.

7. The Governors’ Planning Weekend 12th/13th November:

7.1 The event was discussed and it was agreed that it had been very informative and helpful. The main impression was the incredible rate of change in education policies and guidance. It had helped the Governance Self Assessment Report Working Party to identify issues for attention in the coming year.

7.2 A report on the event, which will include feedback from the plenary session, will be included with the papers for the meeting of the Full Governing Body on 8th December.

7.3 Governor attendance of the Planning Weekend had been the best recorded so far. The opportunity to engage with students and staff, both in the programmed panel sessions and informally, was invaluable.

8. Value Added Exam Results (Paper A/SSS/6/2010):

8.1 Ms Foss mentioned the question raised at the last meeting on the number of students achieving their target grades. This information can be seen from Paper A/SSS/6/2010. The consolidated grades shown for each subject in the last column are from 1 to 9. In broad brush terms, grades from 1 to 5 indicate that the majority of students have achieved their grades, whilst grades from 6 to 9 indicated that the majority have not. Grades shown in red indicate that the cohort is in the top 25% of those analysed and the grades shown in blue are in the bottom 25%.

8.2 The value added results shown in the tables were discussed and Governors were pleased to note the overall grade of 3 for AS subjects and 2 for BTEC. The Principal informed Members that a further analysis had raised the overall grade for A level subjects from 4 to 3.

9. The College Self Assessment Report:

9.1 The report was examined overall with a commentary from Ms Foss. The following points were noted:

- (a) The five year trend in progress towards targets shown on page 5 is useful. The red print should be ignored as the software used should have corrected this.
- (b) The success percentages (shown in the table on page 9) are obtained by multiplying together the achievement percentages and the retention percentages.
- (c) This was the first year of the introduction of new A level exams.
- (d) The overall grade for A level, shown as 4 on page 13, has since been changed to 3
- (e) The “box and whisker” charts on page 16 are healthy in that value added results are positive, i.e. above the line. The “H on its side” shows the spread of the data. Although the College is shown to be very positive in all areas, the Principal advised caution in the interpretation of the statistics.

- (f) The good results in BTEC are very pleasing, particularly as BTEC 1st is a passport to level 3 courses.
- (g) Achievement of high (A to C) grades in GCSE Maths and English is good but less so in Science. This is because the entry levels of the students taking science tend to be lower.
- (h) The foundations courses are run for a distinct cohort of students with disabilities.
- (i) The male/female gap in achievement (girls ahead of boys) tends to be closing.
- (j) The action plan includes the recruitment of an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) specialist to give more opportunity for the various ethnic groups to succeed.

9.2 The targets listed on page 31 were noted and some reservation was expressed regarding target 12

9.3 The general discussion shown above was then followed by a detailed examination of the statistics for each subject.

9.4 Governors thanked the College Management for a very detailed and comprehensive Report. It was unanimously **RESOLVED: That the College Self Assessment Report, including targets 1 to 11 on page 31, should be recommended to the Full Governing Body for approval. It was noted that target 12 will be revised.**

10. College Professional Development Plan (Paper D/SSS/6/2010):

10.1 Ms Foss said that half-day sessions would be held throughout the year with mixed groups of about twelve examining new ideas.

10.2 Paper D/SSS/6/2010 was then examined and it was noted that the development plan was designed to address topics identified for development in the Self Assessment Report.

10.3 **It was agreed that the refresher training on child protection, scheduled for the afternoon of 4th January 2010 should be open to any governors wishing to attend.**

10.4 Although much use is to be made of in-house and Hampshire Consortium expertise, it was noted that there could be a danger of Hampshire “becoming an island”.

10.5 **The 11 Hampshire Colleges Concordat of Curriculum Support Groups is to be a topic for discussion at the Full Governing Body Meeting on 8th December.**

10.6 It was noted that the total funding allocation shown in the last line of the table on page 3 should be amended from £86,000 to £94,000.

11. Governance Self Assessment Report (Paper B/SSS/4/2010) and Review of Performance Indicators (Paper C/SSS/6/2010):

11.1 Performance Indicators:

The Performance Indicators were examined. It was noted that governor attendance had dropped from 81.3% last year to 79.5% this year (against the target minimum of 80%). It was also noted that one scheduled meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee had to be arranged due to iniquity. The remaining performance targets had been met.

11.2 Governance Self Assessment Report:

11.2.1 The fourth draft of the Governance Self Assessment Report was tabled and Ms Cordery said that it had been agreed by the members of the working party (Ms Cordery, Mrs. Hanson and Mrs Hood) following a meeting and e-mail correspondence. The action plan had taken into account the outcome of the recent planning weekend. In listing the strengths of the Board the OFSTED report had been quoted. Diversity had been discussed and it was recommended that this should be kept in mind in recruiting.

11.2.2 It was also noted that the governor link scheme had been agreed but implementation was very patchy. This was discussed and the Principal mentioned the possibility of “student shadowing” as a means of improving Governors’ understanding of the College.

11.2.3 Following further discussion it was unanimously **RESOLVED: That the Governors’ Self Assessment Report, with minor changes to reflect the discussion on governor links, and to give a fuller picture of the strength of governance, should be recommended to the Full Governing Body for approval.**

12. Annual Staff Pay Review:

The Principal said that this was still in negotiation nationally. A final offer of 0.75% was being considered by the Unions.

13. Attendance and Retention Review (Paper E/SSS/6/2010):

13.1 Ms Foss said that attendance at AS classes had reached 94% for the first time. It was also noted that AS attendance was better than A level attendance.

13.2 Enrolment and Retention:

Governors were informed that the term had started with 2313 students (slightly down on last year) and that 51% of year 11 students from the feeder secondary schools had been enrolled. This was the same percentage as last year. There was some concern about the number of students leaving for employment. However, retention is improving. It was thought that the OFSTED report and the new Spectrum building would have an impact on next year's recruiting.

14. Any Other Business:

14.1 The Don Allen Award:

The Principal requested volunteers for a selection panel for the Don Allen Award. There had been four applicants (two for this year and two for next year). The following Governors volunteered: Mr Harding, Mr. Kershaw and Mr. Robotham. The Principal said that his secretary, Jan McLellan, would arrange a meeting.

15. Confirmation of the Dates of Future Meetings:

The following dates were confirmed for future meetings:

Thursday 13th January 2011 at 6.15pm

Thursday 17th March 2011 at 6.15pm

Wednesday 4th May 2011 at 6.15pm

Thursday 16th June 2011 at 6.15pm

CHAIR

13th JANUARY 2011