

**Queen Mary's College  
Local Governing Body**

**Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 6.00pm  
Conference Room, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke**

**Present:** Dr Janice de Sousa (Chair and Trustee)  
Mr Richard Ash  
Mrs Jackie Day  
Mr Mark Henderson (Principal)  
Ms Kirsten Johnston  
Mrs Alexia Makrygianni Wilson – online via TEAMS  
Mr David O'Donnell  
Mr Vladimir Perelighin, student representative – to 7.50pm  
Mrs Sarah Pritchard 9/10 quorate  
Mr Chris Thomas (excluding students)

**In attendance:** Mr Gordon Holdcroft (Trustee)  
Ms Kate Need (Deputy Principal)  
Mr Tom Featherstone – to 7.00pm  
Dr Toni Baldwin (Academy Secretary)

**45. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The LGB welcomed Gordon Holdcroft, Trustee and former Local Governor to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Justin Lamberte, student representative and Marcus Rutland, staff governor.

The LGB noted that Jordan Renault, staff governor had stepped down from the LGB with immediate effect and that a new staff governor would be recruited.

**46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**47.1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the QMC-LGB meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 (paper LGB 29/23) were approved for signature by the Chair.

**48.1 MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

There were no matters arising other than those already covered on the agenda.

**49.1 OXBRIDGE AND SELECTIVE UNIVERSITY SUPPORT**

Janice de Sousa welcomed Tom Featherstone to the LGB to present on QMC's support for students considering applying for Oxford, Cambridge or other selective universities. The LGB noted that Tom had taken over responsibility for this programme three years ago and was gradually increasing the number of students applying to Oxbridge. The LGB heard that 21 students had applied this year, 13 had been interviewed and 4 had received offers two from Costello school, one from the Hurst (Fleet) and one from Henry Beaufort (Winchester). The students in the programme who did not receive offers from Oxford or Cambridge had on

average three or more University offers with at least one from a Russell Group University.

- 49.2 Tom Featherstone explained the Oxbridge support programme – all year 1 students were told about the programme in October of their first year and students with higher GCSEs were specifically targeted to join the programme.
- Year 1 Oct to Dec - students in the programme had weekly sessions with either Tom or Jason Yeamans to introduce them to the process, support them choosing their course and start them off identifying and recording 'super-curricular' activity. (extra-curricular activity – sport, music, scouts etc: super-curricular activity – subject extension activity)
  - Year 1 Jan to Feb – students chose their Oxbridge college, continue with super curricular and oracy work and receive advice from year 2 students
  - From Jan year 1 - students allocated a QMC subject mentor
  - From Feb year 1 - some students allocated an Oxford University Society mentor
  - Year 1 Feb to March – weekly sessions continue, admissions tests explained and super curricular and oracy work continue
  - Year 1 April – July – students draft a personal statement, complete their UCAS form and have interview and admission test practice.
  - Year 2 Sept to Oct – applications are finalised, students registered for admissions tests and given admission test practice.
  - Year 2 Oct – admissions tests take place
  - Year 2 Oct to Dec - interview practice
  - Year 2 Dec - interviews

- 49.3 Reflecting on progress, the LGB heard that interview rates for QMC students were above average, however, Tom Featherstone wanted to significantly increase the number of students going through the process and applying to Oxford or Cambridge. One of the Governors asked if the relatively low number of applications was due to student finances. The LGB heard that there was a perception that Oxford or Cambridge were more expensive than other universities but that was not necessarily the case as both institutions owned a lot of student residences which were cheaper than private rentals. Work was underway to find ways to encourage students who did not come forward to apply.

- 49.4 Local Governors asked Tom Featherstone questions about the process:
- What is the diversity profile of the students who apply to Oxbridge?** Diversity data wasn't collected, however, the students who applied tended to be from schools outside of Basingstoke except for a number of students who had attended Costello school. The majority of students traveling into QMC from outside Basingstoke tended to be more high-achieving students. Tom Featherstone was in the process of setting up a mentoring scheme between year 12 students and year 10 students in Basingstoke schools to encourage the year 10 students to aim high.
- How do you manage disappointment should students not be successful?** This was a significant issue as students who had the confidence to apply tended to be those who had not failed at anything before. The Wellbeing team had spoken to the group about their emotional journey early in the process and the College was careful to celebrate students reaching any point in the application process.

Jancie de Sousa thanked Tom Featherstone for the presentation and all the work he put into supporting and developing students during the year.

*Tom Featherstone left the meeting*

## 50.1 PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

Mark Henderson gave a short review of recent college activities including:

- A production of Beauty and the Beast that had been very well received.
- A Creative Arts trip to Venice and an Art and Design exhibition in the Proteus Creation Space at which the public had the opportunity to vote for a design to be painted on a bench in the town centre.
- Students had had poems published, been successful in the annual Maths Challenge and had the opportunity to contribute to discussion regarding the new Basingstoke hospital.
- The Ukrainian students support group was providing support for this group of refugees.

50.2 The LGB heard about the recent Directors of Learning awayday that had focused on reviewing their job descriptions and workload to help them identify the leadership, management and administration aspects of their roles to enable them to concentrate on the most important things that they did to support quality improvement.

## 51.1 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Kate Need updated the LGB on two aspects of Quality Improvement.

### Revised Timetable

The LGB noted the agreed revised timetable for September 2024 (paper 30/23). Kate Need reported that, following the staff survey a timetable working group had met to respond to timetabling issues raised. Several options were developed and presented to SLT and then the current timetable and the new revised version circulated to all teaching staff for consultation. Staff were almost evenly split on preferring the current and proposed new timetable and SLT decided to move to the new timetable which had equal length lessons, a dedicated enrichment/tutorial session and a protected lunch break for staff. Local Governors questioned Kate Need on the new timetable:

**Would this resolve the problem of staff and students not being able to get food from the café at lunchtime?** This should reduce pressure on the café and other outlets but the lunch break was not too long so that students were less likely to go off site.

**How was the additional 15 minutes for 2<sup>nd</sup> years (for revision and retrieval) working – was it being used for what it was intended for?** Mark Henderson reported that this time for additional recall and retrieval practice, had been discussed with DoLs at their awayday. The Student representative was asked for his view and reported that the longer lesson in 2<sup>nd</sup> year had initially been a shock but that they had got used to it and that staff were doing a lot more revision in the second year, throughout the whole lesson and not just in the last 15 minutes. Mark Henderson reported that students tended to accelerate in their learning in their second year and the additional time supported this.

**Had the Bus problems with the later finish time been resolved?** Kate Need reported that the problems were with a few students taking a specific public bus and the College continued to negotiate with StageCoach to get them to adjust the timing of this bus when possible.

**Had the students been consulted on the new timetable?** Not as yet but it would be communicated to 1<sup>st</sup> years well in advance of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

## 51.2 Lesson Observation Process

The LGB noted the Lesson Observation Form for new staff (paper 31/23). Kate Need introduced this item by reminding the LGB of the three 'lean learning' themes

of a) Clarity, b) Challenge, and c) Assessment and Feedback that were being used for INSET training throughout 2023/24. Kate Need reported on the developmental process for new teachers that consisted of peer observations by mentors and colleagues as well as an informal observation by the relevant DoL in the first few weeks of employment. Alongside the developmental process the college had a formal process of lesson observations for new staff which consisted of three lesson observations (two of which were graded) by first their DoL and then either the Assistant Principal (Helen Henderson), Deputy Principal or Principal. The lesson observation process involved reflection and, in the case of a grade 3 or 4 lesson, additional observation, targets and support.

- 51.3 Kate Need reported that all existing teaching staff had a yearly developmental lesson observation. The LGB discussed the internal lesson observation process noting that staff were also sometimes observed as part of EQRs.  
**Who observed the Directors of Learning?** Dols were observed by the Assistant Principal or Deputy Principal.

#### 52.1 **PREVENT PROCESS**

The LGB noted two papers relating to the Prevent (extremism prevention) process – an updated prevent action plan for 2023/24 and the prevent safeguarding referral plan (papers LGB 32/23 and LG 33/23). Kate Need reported that the statutory Prevent Duty guidance had been updated and had been in force from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. The LGB noted that Kate Need and other relevant members of staff including Lucy Poynter (Director of FL, Safeguarding and SEND) had now completed enhanced training on extremism. Some terminology had changed, for example, young people were now referred to as susceptible to extremism rather than vulnerable to extremism.

- 52.2 **Who produced the Prevent Action Plan and what was it for?** The Prevent Action Plan, like the Safeguarding Action Plan, had been produced by Hampshire County Council to enable all schools and colleges to review their approach to the Prevent Duty and ensure that all areas were being covered. The Action Plan and evidence to back up statements did not need to be submitted to HCC but helped the College monitor its actions and improvements.

The LGB noted that Governors, along with College leadership and management were expected to understand their responsibilities and engage with the Prevent Duty. Kate Need reminded those present that they all took annual training (using SmartLog) and that, for example, the Trustees had discussed the importance of lockdown practices. Kate Need reported that engagement with the Prevent Duty was a condition of ESFA funding and the College had to report back on their compliance with the Duty.

- 52.3 The LGB discussed how students perceived the Prevent Duty. Sarah Pritchard reported that the College firewall only worked over College Wi-Fi so, for example, didn't cover apps (tiktok) but did block pictures on Discord.

**How did the College promote British Values?** Kate Need reported that the majority of students had heard about British Values regularly at secondary school so the challenge was to make it relevant and interesting. The biggest issue locally was the promotion of right-wing extremism and, for example, a recent tutorial session had been on democracy and the rule of law in relation to immigration and refugees.

One of the Governor questioned if the College should have a Freedom of Speech/Expression Policy and asked to see what policies were in place.

**Action: circulate policies relevant to Freedom of Speech. KND**

The LGB noted that over the last few years QMC had made two referrals through the Channel process and a referral to the Counter Terrorism Police using the Prevent Process map. Kate Need reported that she would talk in more detail about one of the referrals in the confidential section of the meeting.

### 53.1 GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT

Chris Thomas reported back on a recent Careers Visit (23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2024) [*Note: report uploaded to GovernorHub following the meeting*]. The LGB noted that this visit had been framed around the recommendations from Ofsted:

- “too few students benefit from work experience to develop knowledge of employment further”
- “Improve the quality of careers advice so that students are fully informed of the options available to them..... students who wish to take an alternative route are as well prepared and supported as their peers moving onto university”

53.2 Chris Thomas reported that there had been significant progress on both these issues. The LGB heard that the college was running both in person and hybrid work experience as well as work experience on challenge abroad trips to mirror changes within the world of work. The number of students benefiting from work experience had doubled from the previous year and was continuing to increase. UniFrog was being used to record students’ work experience and QMC was looking to use the placement tool on UniFrog more to facilitate placements. The development of the progress hub would improve the facilities for hybrid work placements. The LGB heard that the college was looking to give parity to employment/ apprenticeships alongside university routes, for example, during progress day there were speakers for both areas.

53.3 The LGB noted a report on the recent Governor Visit morning from Jackie Day (paper QMC 35/23). Those present who had attended the visit reported that it had been an interesting and useful morning:

- Mark Henderson had presented on teaching and learning activities including the focus of the Director of Learning awayday, careers week and mock examinations.
- Victoria Renault, Director of Learning for Progression/careers/HE/work experience/UCAS and admissions had talked through the plans for developing the progression hub including setting aside an area to act as an office for hybrid work experience. The LGB noted that the College had been successful in bidding for a grant from Basingstoke and Deane to improve the area and it was hoped that this work would take place over the holidays.
- Tom Cops, Director of Learning for Creative Arts and Technologies had discussed his curriculum area (merged from Arts and Media) with those on the visit and then taken the Governors and Trustees to see snapshots of different lessons taking place. The Governors had had an overview of the wide range of creative arts and were able to get feedback from students on, for example, how the recent trip to Venice had inspired their art.

The LGB briefly discussed the format of the visits noting that the format where Directors of learning facilitated departmental visits was working well. The LGB put on record their thanks to all the DoLs involved in these visits as well as all the students who were interested and proud to show the Governors their work.

#### 54.1 **REPORT FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Vladimir Perelighin reported on current SU activities and any issues of concern raised by the student body.

The LGB noted:

- The SU was running a Cultural week which would include students celebrating their cultures.
- This year's SU were now approaching their exams and were in the process of recruiting their replacements. 1<sup>st</sup> year students had been asked to express interest in the roles and a timeline had been set for hustings and voting. This year's SU had had a larger social media presence and were using this to encourage interest in the roles. A QR code with information had been added to plasma screens.
- The current SU were hoping to provide more of a handover than they had received.

#### 54.2 **How were students finding the Careers support?** Vladimir Perelighin gave a student's perspective on the recent progression day and careers support. The LGB heard that Vladimir had had mock interview practice during progression week and was now applying for degree apprenticeships.

The LGB discussed different recruitment processes, noting that a lot of recruitment for large companies such as BAE systems and the Civil Service, now started with online, competency based, interviews and tasks where applicants had to either be filmed responding to questions live or record themselves responding to questions and then submit the videos. The LGB noted that these type of interviews (online but without an interviewer) were a different and new skill for students, some of whom were understandably less confident. Vladimir suggested that this was an area where the college could help students practice this type of interview. Two of the Local Governors had been involved in setting up these sorts of 'sieving' interviews and offered to support the progression team if helpful.

**Action: Governors to support progression team, QMC to provide online interview practice**

VRT

#### 55.1 **GOVERNORS MONITORING INFORMATION – *standing item***

The LGB noted the monitoring report for the first half of the spring term (paper LGB 36/23). Kate Need drew the Governors attention to the executive summary and highlighted:

- National comparisons for November 2023 Maths and English GCSE retakes demonstrating that the results achieved at QMC were well above benchmark.
- Significantly improved attendance and retention, both areas that the college has focused on for 2023/24
- The students leaving mid-year leavers were representative of the current student cohort with no concerning trends.
- Applications were up on previous years, however, the increase in applications was mainly from schools outside of the Basingstoke area. Applicants were being sent newsletters relevant to their subject choices to keep them engaged with the process. The marketing team were able to see what proportion of potential students (and their parents) had engaged with each newsletter.

One of the Governors reiterated the view of the LGB that the revised half termly monitoring reports with executive summary provided useful context and had significantly improved the accessibility of Governor monitoring information.

- 56.1 **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN QMC-LGB AND NHEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
 The LGB noted a summary of Trust meetings and activities since the last LGB meeting along with the proposed Strategic Plan for 2024-27 (discussed at the recent Strategy Day) and the most recent Risk Register (papers LGB 37/23, 38/23 and 39/23). No issues of concern were raised.

*The Student Representative left the meeting*

57.1 **CONFIDENTIAL UPDATE**

The LGB had two confidential updates:

- Kate Need reported on a student, who had been externally referred to the Prevent Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and who had now been signed off by MASH. The LGB were pleased to hear that the student was progressing well at college.

- 57.2 • Kate Need gave a case study and recapped on the proactive processes in place to support teaching staff through their probationary period including lesson observations, reviews and development opportunities. The LGB noted that the probationary period could also be extended.

58.1 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Heating not working in Conference Room.

**Action: Report heating in Conference Room TBN**

59. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS 2023/24**

Local Governing Body meetings

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 6pm

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 6pm

Governors' Visits

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – am

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*The Chair thanked those present and the meeting ended at 8.05pm*

To be signed following approval at the meeting on 1st May 2024

..... Janice de Sousa (Chair)

<b>SUMMARY OF ACTIONS</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Minute 52.3: circulate policies relevant to Freedom of Speech.	Next Meeting	KND
Minute 54.2: Governors to support progression team, QMC to provide online interview practice.		KND/VRT
Minute 58.1: report heating in Conference Room.	Following meeting	TBN

Toni Baldwin  
 Academy Secretary, Queen Mary's College