

Queen Mary's College Local Governing Body

Minutes of a Meeting held on Wednesday 15th November 2023 at 6.00pm
Conference Room, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke

Present:	Dr Janice de Sousa (Chair and Trustee) Mr Chris Thomas (Vice-Chair) Mr Richard Ash Mrs Jackie Day Mr Mark Henderson (Principal) Ms Kirsten Johnston Mr Justin Lamberte, student representative – to 7.30pm Mr Vladimir Perelighin, student representative- to 7.30pm Mrs Sarah Pritchard Mr Jordan Renault, staff governor Mr Marcus Rutland, staff governor	9/10 quorate (excluding students)
In attendance:	Ms Kate Need (Deputy Principal) Mrs Helen Henderson (Assistant Principal) Dr Toni Baldwin (Academy Secretary)	

17. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Alexia Makrygianni Wilson.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

19.1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the QMC-LGB meeting held on 28th September 2023 (paper LGB 13/23) were approved for signature by the Chair.

20.1 MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Matters Arising not otherwise on the agenda:

Minute 6.5: Update on Geography re-marks – Kate Need reported that the Geography coursework had been re-moderated, the marks did not change, however, the report has been useful. Several students asked for their papers to be re-marked and their grades either stayed the same or went up. Unfortunately, not enough students applied to get their papers re-marked to trigger a centre re-mark.

20.2 Minute 8.2: Chair or LGB to meet with Student Governors – Janice de Sousa reported that she had had a useful meeting with the Student Governors.

Minute 10.2: HSCP Audit – Kate Need reported that, following the audit, the required annual submission had been made to the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. After a brief discussion, the LGB asked to have conformation each year that all members of staff had completed their safeguarding training.

Action: Report Annual Safeguarding training check to LGB KND

21.1 PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

Mark Henderson gave his regular update starting with an overview of the current Sixth Form College Landscape.

- Sixth Form College included both 16-19 academies (such as QMC) and 16-19 free schools and that there were now only around 40 of the original incorporated Sixth Form Colleges which had not converted into an academy or merged into another institution.
- All SFC/16-19 academies were currently graded good or outstanding by Ofsted
- There had been a recent Government announcement of a new Level 3 qualification ABS (Advanced British Standard) to replace A Levels, T Levels and BTECs – QMC was waiting for further information before making any changes to curriculum.
- Incorporated SFC such as Barton Peveril and Peter Symonds were now aligned to FE Colleges and therefore accessed against the national Skills Agenda.

21.2 Mark Henderson provided data on the makeup of the current student body. QMC had 43 Foundation Learning students, 123 Level 2 students, 1009 Level 3 Year 1s and 892 Level 3 Year 2s. Of the Level 3 students 65% were taking all A Levels, 18% a mix of A Level and Applied Vocational courses and 17% only Applied Vocational courses. The LGB broadly discussed education across Basingstoke noting that there used to be a lot of overlap in the courses offered at QMC and BCOT, however, the two colleges were now more distinct with BCOT offering mainly Level 2 Courses and some T Levels having stopped the majority of their Level 3 Applied Vocational courses.

21.3 Mark Henderson reported that, due to the return to 2019 grading of GCSEs there had been a significant increase in Aspire students to around 160 students (from 40). These students were taking Level 2 and Level 3 courses including Maths/ English GCSE retakes with the aim of starting a Level 3 programme next year. The LGB noted that there had also been an increase in the proportion of students with GCSEs at grade 7 and above including strong science and maths students.

21.4 Mark Henderson reminded the LGB of QMCs Mission “investing in individuals to build better futures” and how the college was approaching this with the curriculum, enrichments, tutorials, work experience etc. to give the students a wide range of knowledge and soft skills.

21.5 Mark Henderson presented recent data on QMC students who had gone to university and graduated in 2022. The LGB noted that QMC compared very well generally above sixth form sector and state school benchmarks and below independent schools except for the percentage of students getting 1st class degrees from Russell Group universities where students from QMC did better than all other groups. The LGB also noted data on students who had come from areas with the lowest HE participation rate and students whose parents did not have an HE qualification. A very high proportion of QMC students achieved first class and upper second degrees, a higher proportion than students from state schools or from the sixth form sector. The LGB were very pleased to hear that QMC students from a wide range of backgrounds went on to do excellently at university.

Could this data be compared against other colleges? Colleges only received their own data so could not compare to other colleges, in addition, QMC had a broader intake than some other local colleges who had a more academic intake,

22.1 **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mark Henderson reminded the LGB of the Ofsted feedback including improving the “curriculum for *personal development* to better prepare students for life in modern Britain and the world of work”. Mark highlighted action since the Ofsted inspection:

- The new progression hub

approved

- The new support hub
- Increases in the number of students taking work experience and careers advice.

22.2 The LGB heard what the college was currently focusing on including as part of the previous two INSET days:

- The role of the tutor and setting an impactful programme for tutorials and 121 sessions.
- Lean learning
- The science of learning
- Teaching approaches (working walls, live feedback/marking using visualisers)
- Capturing a students' learning journey (Unifrog).

The LGB discussed personal development and the 121 sessions that tutors have with each of their tutees. Students tended to not value the 121s until they were completing their UCAS forms. Helen Henderson reported that the 1st year sessions would be more skills focused and students would be encouraged to start their UCAS applications at the end of year 1 to reduce the scramble in the autumn term.

22.3 Mark Henderson ended his presentation with a few updates on:

- the termly Principal's nominations process
- the recent teaching and support staff pay settlement.
- the launch of a staff survey
- events and productions at the end of term.

23.1 **GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT**

The LGB noted feedback on governor's observations of SAR meetings including a summary of all 2022/23 curriculum focused visits (LGB 14/23). The LGB discussed timing of the SAR process noting that this was constrained by when the data was available so the meetings could not be moved earlier. All the Local Governors who had observed MYR or SAR meetings had found them interesting and useful in improving their understanding of the college.

Do staff mind having Governors observing? Mark Henderson reported that it had been good for Governors to be involved, staff had been pleased to share their work and all Governors had approached the meetings as interested observers without making critical judgements. Governors asked to continue with these observations and if possible, see the same subject MYR as SAR for continuity.

23.2 The LGB noted the report of a safeguarding visit carried out by Sarah Pritchard on 3rd November 2023 (LGB 15/23). Sarah Pritchard had concentrated on reviewing monitoring and filtering (a new KSCIE requirement) and had met with IT staff to understand the systems and processes in place as well as talking to a group of computing students about their experience.

23.3 The LGB discussed the recent Governor Visit morning on 9th November 2023. Governors had:

- participated in a focus group discussion on the new Vista system (student information system with sections available to parents).
- visited the new support hub and met with those in charge of both emotional and academic support.
- Met with the Director of Learning for Social Sciences for a briefing and then visited a range of lessons.
- Attended the 'kick off' meeting for 1st year students thinking of applying for Oxbridge universities.

- 23.4 The LGB discussed their observations from the visit.
- The new Vista was looking promising, governors, particularly those who were also parents were able to make suggestions from a parent's point of view including what information parents wanted to see and terminology/language that parents would understand.
 - The Student Hub had been well used as a study space when the Governors had visited, and the staff involved were very impressive. Governors had pressed the staff on how they were being supported to support students and they were positive about the support they were getting from Directors and the SLT. Janice de Sousa suggested that the outside area next to the support hub should be re-vamped (possibly using donations or as a project for foundation learning or arts students).

How are staff supported as the student support staff had also mentioned supporting staff? Kate Need reported that staff were supported through Human Resources, and that the College would be taking the opportunity of the staff survey to signpost support for staff.

The LGB asked to hear a review of the Support Hub after a year of operation.

Action: review of Support Hub KND

- 23.5 Governors had found the curriculum area discussion with Ruma Rouf the Director of Learning for Social Sciences very interesting. The LGB noted that some Social Science courses had been moved to a new curriculum area 'Business and Law' with the appointment of a new DoL, however, Social Sciences remained a large curriculum area. Governors highlighted from the lessons that they had visited:
- Students constructive use of technology (mobile phones) within lessons.
 - Students doing revision in class.
 - One class of around 25 students (economics) – Kate Need reported that class sizes ranged from 8 students up to 25. Economics was a growing area with only one teacher and therefore had large classes.
 - Different mixes of students in different subjects, eg. Economics was almost entirely male students, psychology was more female students.

The LGB was pleased to hear from the discussion with the DoL that retention was looking much better this year.

Action: circulate new organisational structure KND

24.1 **GOVERNORS MONITORING INFORMATION – *standing item***

The LGB noted two new monitoring reports (papers LGB 16/23 and 17/23). Kate Need reminded the LGB that she had met with some of the Local Governors last year to review the format of the Governors' monitoring information and that this was the first set of revised information:

- Headline report giving a snapshot of the college's learners
- Half-termly Monitoring report with executive summary (replacing previous monthly monitoring reports).

- 24.2 Looking first at the Headline Report, Kate Need added to the previous discussion of the current cohort highlighting the gender breakdown (54% female, 46% male). The LGB discussed this noting that this was partially a result of boys underachieving in secondary education and being more interested in vocational routes. The LGB noted that one 15-year-old had started at QMC in September, having previously been homeschooled. Kate Need reminded those present that staff at QMC had met with the student and their parents prior to them starting college and that a detailed risk assessment had been put in place. Kate Need highlighted the make up of the cohort (high needs, bursary, care lever etc.). The LGB noted the final chart in this snapshot – destinations – and Kate Need

reminded those present that they would get a detailed presentation on destinations later in the year by which time the college hoped to have reduced the number of 'unknowns'.

24.3 Turning to the more detailed monitoring report. Kate Need highlighted:

- Attendance was currently looking positive, there had been some changes to the Hampshire School Transport Service which had affected Level 1 attendance and GCSE attendance was, as usual, lower than average, however, the majority of courses had attendance above 90%.
- Retention (a focus for 2023/24) between yr1 and yr2 was better for 2023, however, the college had a list of courses with below benchmark retention which were being monitored closely.

The LGB discussed some of the courses with lower retention including Childcare where students often left to go to an apprenticeship or employment and Health and Social Care where students were faced with an exam in the January of their first year. the LGB noted details of the students who had left the college since September and Kate Need reported that around half had had left to go to another college there was a continuing pattern of students leaving as not 'fit for study' due to their current mental health.

24.4 The LGB noted current recruitment data and discussed the situation with several of the feeder schools. Those present noted trends in recruitment from each school and Helen Henderson and Kate Need reported on activities that the college was doing with some of the feeder schools, use of the music facilities, mentoring of high achievers by Oxbridge candidates etc. Mark Henderson reminded the LGB that schools were now required to demonstrate that pupils had been given advice on a range of options. A lot of potential students applied to more than one college and attended more than one set of welcome/taster events before making their final choice.

25.1 **REPORT FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

The student representatives reported on current SU activities and any issues of concern raised by the student body. The students gave a short presentation highlighting:

- The SU were documenting/reporting on what they were doing each month so that the following year's SU had a structure to follow.
- The SU were now using the link box and notice board regularly to be more visible.
- Students had come dressed in Halloween themed outfits and the SU had run a Halloween raffle.
- Two members of the SU had attended the Basingstoke Remembrance Parade and a cross had been laid on behalf of the college.
- There had been a lot of interest in running a prom and a group had been set up to facilitate this.

25.2 Social media

- The design and marketing officer had made professional posters to advertise student voice meetings.
- The SU are uploading weekly reels to social media (ticktock and Instagram) to advertise their activities.

There had been a low turnout for the last Student Voice meeting so there had been a lot of advertising and cake was being provided at the next meeting to encourage students to attend. 2nd year students were doing mocks so the meeting was being aimed at 1st year students and vocational students.

The LGB discussed the use of LinkedIn – Students made individual LinkedIn profiles as part of their careers/ work experience activity. The QMC SU had previously had a LinkedIn profile however the current SU did not have its login details.

Action: find SU LinkedIn profile login SU

25.3 In response to a question about progression, the students reported that this was currently a busy time for getting in UCAS applications and then applications for degree apprenticeships were starting soon. One of the students reported that as students were split into degree and apprenticeship routes, it was difficult to get all the information needed if you were interested in both options.

26.1 **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN QMC-LGB AND NHEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
The LGB noted a summary of Trust meetings and activities since the last LGB meeting (LGB 18/23). Toni Baldwin highlighted a strategy discussion and meeting of the QM Leisure Directors and the annual Senior Postholders Employment Committee meeting which included appraisals of the Principal and Deputy Principal.

The Student Representatives left the meeting

27.1 **QMC 2021/22 SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The GB noted the draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR 22/23) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP 23/24) with appendices (Papers LGB 18/23 and LGB 19/23) Kate Need introduced the papers reporting that the structure of the documents had been reviewed and streamlined following the Ofsted inspection in December 2022 and that one of the aims had been to make the information clearer for Local Governors to monitor.

27.2 Kate Need reported on the context of this year's SAR/QIP

- These students had not sat formal GCSE examinations and had entered QMC with Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs).
- Students did not have any exam adjustments
- Grades were set nationally at 2019 levels.
- Some vocational subjects had switched awarding body in 2019 and therefore had limited experience of external examinations.
- Benchmarks were from 2022 where students did have adjustments (e.g pre-released information) and grade boundaries were 'more generous'.

27.3 Kate Need highlighted from the SAR:

Strengths

- Applied vocational diploma qualifications
- GCSE results
- Foundation Learning
- The percentage of students gaining HE places

Weaknesses

- Achievement rates – impacted by lower retention
- The percentage of high grades in some A Levels were lower than in previous years
- Value added grades were lower than in previous years – impacted by the TAGs and changes to grade boundaries
- Applied vocational examined units
- Certain groups of students did not achieve as previously: females, ASC (autism spectrum condition) and students with poor mental health

- 27.4 The LGB noted areas of focus for the college the majority of which were already being put in place:

Quality of Education

- Pastoral strategies (intervention and support) to improve attendance and retention.
- Strategies for teaching and learning to improve high grades and value added.

Personal development

- Careers - progression
- Community involvement – social action

Leadership and Management

- Development of Middle Leaders (DoLs)
- LGB understanding of weaknesses in college data

Kate Need reminded the LGB that the students who finished their courses tended to do very well and that it was the students who dropped out early that affected the achievement rates. QMC tried to keep students in college and enable them to do their best, however, anecdotally other colleges had also found this year group very hard to engage.

- 27.5 The LGB questioned SLT on the SAR and QIP

What were you doing to improve retention as this was a national issue did you know what strategies were being used elsewhere? Since the start of the year, students were chased immediately they missed a lesson. There was a lot of early intervention especially for students with mental health difficulties. Academic intervention was also key to getting students to stay (academic and emotional support was linked). The college was also identifying students that might leave early for example, Aspire students might leave once they got their GCSEs.

To the staff governors - what is being done to improve high grades? The INSET days had been very useful to concentrate with their teams on teaching and learning strategies – streamlining resources, using AI to draft model answers, use of lesson preparation (students doing the easier work at home and then build on it in class), model answers to help students understand what good quality writing looks like.

The LGB thanked Kate Need and Helen Henderson for a useful discussion and asked for the list of subjects requiring improvement (where achievement rate is below national average) to be brought back to future meetings for review and monitoring of actions. The LGB recommended the draft SAR/QIP to the Board of Trustees.

KND

Action: LGB monitoring of subjects with lower achievement rates.

- 28.1 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

One of the Local Governors asked why QMC was not a vape free campus. Mark Henderson reported that the College had tried to become smoke free previously but students then moved to smoking on the street. It was quickly decided to keep students smoking in specific areas of the site but then put in support to stop them smoking. The College was looking into how to support students in giving up vaping.

approved

29. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS 2023/24

Local Governing Body meetings

Thursday 25th January 2024 at 6pm
Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 6pm
Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 6pm
Thursday 20th June 2024 at 6pm

Governors' Visits

Wednesday 28th February 2024 – am
Tuesday 11th June 2024 – am

The Chair thanked those present and the meeting ended at 8.15pm

To be signed following approval at the meeting on 25th January 2023

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Janice de Sousa (Chair)

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	Timescale	Responsibility
<u>Minute 20.2</u> Report Annual Safeguarding Check to LGB	Nov 2024	KND
<u>Minute 23.4:</u> review of support hub	(tbc) June 2024 or Sept 2024	KND/ Lucy Poynter
<u>Minute 23.5:</u> circulate new organisational structure	Following meeting	KND
<u>Minute 25.2:</u> find SU LinkedIn profile login	Following meeting	SU
<u>Minute 27.5:</u> LGB monitoring of subjects with lower achievement rates	Jan 2024 and onwards	KND

Toni Baldwin
Academy Secretary, Queen Mary's College