

AQUINAS COLLEGE
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Date: 6 October 2015
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Mr B Hickey, Mr A Martin, Cllr T McGee, Fr P Munroe, Dr A Smith and Mr D Pearson.

Cllr T McGee in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Dr P Beatty and Ms H Delahan.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors and Staff were asked to declare any interest, which they may have in any of the items on the Agenda for this meeting. No interests were declared.

3. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2015 copies of which had been circulated previously be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not covered on the Agenda.

5. RESULTS OVERVIEW

Introducing this item Mr Pearson outlined how the subject thermometer works and what an AS level Alps score of 1.0 means in the report.

Mr Pearson circulated a paper to all Governors that covered the following areas:

- i) Alps AS level – National Benchmarks
- ii) What an AS level Alps score of 1.0 means
- iii) Alps AS level – Raw results by subject for 2015
- iv) Alps AS level – Subject value added overview for 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015
- v) Alps A level – Raw results by subject for 2015
- vi) Alps A level – Subject value added overview for 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015
- vii) Alps BTEC – Raw results by subject for 2015
- viii) Alps BTEC - Subject value added overview for 201
- ix) Alps BTEC 90 – Credit Diploma – Raw results by subject for 2015
- x) Alps BTEC 90 – Credit Diploma - Subject value added overview for 2014 and 2015
- xi) Alps BTEC Certificate – Raw results by subject for 2015
- xii) Alps BTEC Certificate - Subject value added overview for 2012,2013, 2014 and 2015

Mr Pearson went through each paper and outlined the significance of the results shown. He advised Governors that the Alps for each area is published within 2/3 days of the results being

announced. In terms on the national benchmarking grades 1, 2 and 3 are in the top 25% of providers, grades 4, 5 and 6 covers the middle 50% of providers, whilst grades 7, 8 and 9 are in the bottom 25% of providers.

Governors looked at specific subjects and asked Mr Pearson the reason for that particular figure.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the English Language papers were all being remarked. Mr Hickey asked which examining board had been used. Mr Pearson replied that it was AQA. Dr Smith commented on the improvement in Law and Mr Pearson felt that the students taking the course were now more appropriate as the BTEC in Law had also been introduced. Mr Hickey asked what the position was for students taking Law at university. Mr Pearson advised Governors that the Russell Group were not keen on accepting the BTEC Law qualification and that it was not necessary to have an A level in Law to follow the course at university.

Cllr McGee felt that the report identified the following areas of difficulty:

- a) The need to change examining boards
- b) The quality of some teaching in the classroom
- c) The need to take follow up action
- d) A change in personnel in some subject areas

6. QUALITY REVIEW MEETINGS

Mr Pearson circulated a paper to all Governors that indicated the grade that a department and subjects with the department had been given in September 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. In the Quality Review Meeting a department is given a grade based on its raw results, comparison to benchmarks and Alps score. Concerns are raised for any department or subject that is grade 3 or below. Mr Pearson advised Governors that overall the vast majority of grades are level 2 or above. The aim was to reduce the number of U grades by making sure that students are on the right courses.

Outstanding results from the following departments were achieved this year, Law, PE, Employment Skills and Pathways. In Art and Design the vast majority of provision is also outstanding. Areas of concern are English, History, Maths and Media.

Action Plan strategies are in place for subjects where improvements in both raw results and value added are expected for 2015/2016. There are three subject areas where it is proving difficult to implement strategies for improvement.

For 2015/2016 a new senior management group - Standards has been introduced to provide a more coordinated and systematic approach to setting college wide targets and improving outcomes. The group will oversee progress against targets within the year and crucially try and measure/capture the impact of strategies for improvement. A list of how the Section Head Improvement Strategies are based was also included in the paper.

The paper also showed the subject areas that have improved since the last inspection in 2013 and those from within the group that had improved by the Quality Review Meetings in September 2015. Mr Pearson added that any action plan that is not good is sent back to the department to review it. The action plan must have an impact.

Dr Smith expressed the view that education is not just about examination results. Mr Pearson replied that it was about getting the balance right.

Mr Hickey asked how good are staff at tracking and in predicting grades. Mr Pearson replied that staff look every six weeks to see if a student is on track. The correlation between predictions and actual results is not good.

7. LINEARITY 2015 ONWARDS

Mr Pearson advised Governors that there were 14 linear A levels that started in September 2015 and that there would be 11 more next year with final subjects commencing in September 2017. Students will sit AS levels this year but probably not from September 2016. AS is only a measure of progress.

Cllr McGee reminded Governors that there were a number of staff who had not taught Linear A levels and that they may need some support.

8. CURRICULUM SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

Mr Pearson circulated to all Governors the Curriculum Self Assessment Report 2014/2015 for all subject areas. The report showed the self assessment grades for the last six years. A plus or minus indicated the direction of travel. A grade two or above is good, grade 3 requires improvement, grade 3- is a move towards inadequate and grade 3+ is a move towards good.

Fr Munroe asked if staff saw the report. Mr Pearson replied that all staff are involved in the final decision.

9. NEW INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

Mr Pearson circulated copies of slides that showed the key points of The Common Inspection Framework for all schools and he drew Governors attention to the following:

i) A focus on Leadership and Management

ii) A short Inspection of 1 or 2 days to see if the college remains good. If safeguarding is judged to be not effective then a full inspection will be triggered.

iii) The Key judgement Areas are a) Effectiveness of Leadership and Management b) Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment c) Personal Development, behaviour and welfare and d) Outcomes for Learners and e) Safeguarding is a thread throughout all key judgements.

iv) The structure and role of the new SAR

Mr Pearson advised Governors that they need to be satisfied that the self assessment is good. If it was felt to be outstanding the college could ask for an inspection. Mr Martin reported on a training session he attended organised by the local authority when the importance of PHSE was flagged as a main area. Mr Hickey asked for information on how the college tracks the data it has with particular reference to how the predictions in January relate to actual outcomes. Mr Pearson advised Governors that he would provide the information, along with details of the management structure for the next meeting of the committee.

Cllr McGee asked for the New Inspection Framework to be an item for the Governors

training session in May 2016.

10. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

A copy of the Committee's Terms of Reference had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. It was agreed that in point 2 the number of members be increased from six to eight.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr McGee reminded Governors that The Area Review Team were visiting the college tomorrow (7 October 2015). It appears that there are two teams working at any one time. Experience from other colleges shows that the team will have a good background knowledge of the college along with good local knowledge.

Cllr McGee reported that all the Catholic Sixth Form Colleges had met on Friday 2 October 2015. In the Greater Manchester area there are 5 colleges Aquinas, Holy Cross (Bury), Loreto and Xavarian (Manchester) and St John Rigby (Wigan).

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9 February 2016 at 4.30pm

Signed _____

Date _____