

AQUINAS COLLEGE
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Date: 11 June 2019
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Miss M Braithwaite, Mr R Harris, Miss S Howard, Mr A Martin, Mr D Pearson,
Dr A Smith and Mr M Taylor.

Dr P Beatty in the Chair.

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms C Vitti (Vice Principal) Mr T Conlon Clerk to the Governing Body

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Dr Beatty.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. 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.

4. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2019 copies of which had been circulated previously be approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Chaplaincy Minute 10 (b) - Mr Pearson advised Governors that Carmel Wanlass has been appointed as the new Chaplain and she will start in September 2019.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Ms Vitti introduced a paper Guiding Principles for Learning, Teaching and Assessment that had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting.

Ms Vitti advised Governors that when planning for Learning, Teaching and Assessment the college tries to ensure that a high quality educational experience with a broad and diverse curriculum is provided for every student. The college strives to develop students as valued citizens and to prepare them for their next steps. The college focuses on:

i) Inspiring, engaging and challenging students to maximise their progress and learning.

- ii) Ensuring appropriate pitch; practice; pace; challenge; rigour and student effort inside and outside lessons.
- iii) Assessment, feedback, tracking and support.
- iv) Learning how to learn.
- v) Supporting students' well-being.

This is achieved by:

- a) Setting and maintaining the highest expectations (rigour).
- b) Assessing and understanding students' existing knowledge and skills and planning lessons that build on this so that they make quick and effective progress (pitch, pace and challenge).
- c) Developing students' skills, knowledge and understanding (practice).
- d) Getting students to think and engage with their learning (challenge and student effort).
- e) Being transparent about how to achieve a high grade (all).

In each case it was explained how this was done.

Dr Beatty felt that the information gathered was now clarifying what the college was doing and how the different parts of the college come together. Dr Smith added that he felt that it provided teachers with inspiration on what they could achieve and not a menu to choose from. He also sought clarification on what did the 5 hours in paragraph 3(h) meant. Ms Vitti replied that the 5 hours were per week and that this would be amended in paper. In response to a question Miss Howard added that a lot of teachers are already doing this. Mr Taylor was pleased to see that there was a link with employers and student outcomes built into their learning.

7. IN YEAR PROGRESS –MID YEAR QUALITY REVIEW

Ms Vitti circulated to Governors a) a paper that gave details of the ALPS grades and b) an updated version of the report that they had received at the Spring Term meeting on 5 February 2019.

The paper summarised the actions that had been taken to improve outcomes. It used a traffic light system to assess risk whereby:

Red = Subjects which have serious concerns, some with more than 40 students.

Amber = Subjects which have some concerns; in some cases L6 results may show improvement which should have a positive effect on U6 outcomes for 2019.

Green = Subjects which have few concerns because in year actions appear to be having a positive effect to improve U6 outcomes for 2019.

When making judgements about the level of risk to results in each subject, the views of the Section Heads who work most closely with the Curriculum Leaders have been considered to decide how confident they are in the predictions made by departments. Where a subject is underlined in the paper, it shows that last year's outcomes and/or the accuracy of predictions suggest that the subject could be at risk of having "blue" ALPS for August 2019 (poor value added outcomes).

The full report is available for governors to see and will be distributed at full governors meeting.

Governors noted that no subject had been classified as Red.

Ms Vitti added that the predictions carry a health warning in that they are only as good as the data used. Mr Taylor asked how good are staff at predicting the grades. Ms Vitti replied that work has been undertaken with the staff whose predictions have been out. Dr Smith added that predicted grades are often optimistic. Governors asked for clarification on the predicted grades for a number of subjects. Ms Vitti advised Governors that the predictions used for ALPS Connect are not quite the same as those used for an external audience such as UCAS. In September the data will be updated with the actual results.

Mr Taylor asked with some universities offering unconditional offers to students is there evidence that students ease up and do not get the predicted grades. Mr Pearson replied that there was some national evidence to suggest that this is the case. He stated that he writes to parents to make them aware of this potential pitfall and that the college tries to inspire students to do as well as they can.

Members asked if the papers could be circulated prior to the meeting in future.

8. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

A copy of the current Teaching and Learning Committee Terms of Reference had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. After a full discussion it was agreed that no changes needed to be made.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 1 October 2019 at 4.30pm, subject to the Calendar of Meetings being agreed by the Governing Body at its meeting on 25 June 2019.

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____