

AQUINAS COLLEGE
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Date: 1 October 2019

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

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

In attendance: Ms C Vitti Vice Principal

Dr P Beatty in the Chair.

Dr Beatty welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year.

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Dr Beatty.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received and accepted from Mr G Hynes.

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 11 June 2019 copies of which had been circulated previously were approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

- a) Chaplaincy – Minute 5 – Mr Pearson advised Governors that Mrs Carme Scanlon (nee Wanlass) had taken up her post as college Chaplain at the beginning of term and that she had introduced some new initiatives.

6. RESULTS OVERVIEW

Ms Vitti introduced three papers that had been circulated to all Governors prior to the meeting. The papers covered the following areas:

- a) Pass rates

The paper showed the current Pass Rate, Retention, Achievement, High Grades, A* - A and Alps for A level and AS level. For Vocational subjects the papers showed Pass Rate, Retention, Achievement, High Grades and Alps. In each case the National Achievement Rate Table (NART) for March 2019 was also shown. The college was above the NART level except in Retention and Achievement for some vocational subjects. Ms Vitti added that it is possible that we might see a reduction in the NART when it is released in March 2020 as more colleges register students over 2 years.

b) ALPS Data

Dr Beatty drew Governors attention to the Alps Grade Thermometer at the end of the paper. The paper covered the following:

- What an Alps score of 1 – 9 means
- i) Ips A level – Strategic Overview for 2018/2019
- ii) Ips A level – Raw results by subject for 2019
- iii) Analysis of students by ability for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- iv) Ips A level – Subject value added overview for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- v) Ips 2010 BTEC – Strategic Overview for 2018/2019
- vi) Ips BTEC -Raw Results by subject 2019
- vii) Ips BTEC -Subject value added overview for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- viii) Ips BTEC Foundation/90-credit Diploma – Subject value added overview for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- ix) Ips BTEC Certificate -Raw Results by subject 2019
- x) Ips BTEC – Subject value added overview for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- xi) Ips AS level – Strategic Overview for 2018/2019
- xii) Ips AS level – Quality Indicator Value Added Score 2019

Ms Vitti advised Governors that the Level 2 results for 2019 were as follows:

Level 2 Pass Rates

GCSE Maths
GCSE English
Business
Financial Studies

Mr Pearson advised Governors that overall the results are similar to last year which compares favourably with other colleges who seem to have taken a dip. He added that Alps is becoming a less dependable measure during this phase of transition to linearity. The Raw results are good. Vocational outcomes are very strong and A level results are good. Dr Smith added that Alps methodology data is out of date as it relies on previous years' results. Ms Vitti advised Governors that you have to be very careful with the value added data during this period of transition to linearity.

A discussion took place on the number of students taking Psychology and Mr Pearson advised Governors that Criminology is now offered by the college as an alternative and it was now in its second year. Approximately 150 students are studying Criminology (4th most popular subject) which is more coursework based than Psychology which is still the most popular subject. Ms Vitti added that it is important to make sure that the student is on the right study programme. Mr Pearson added that there is a period of transition due to linearity and students are typically taking 8/9 GCSE subjects and 3 A level subjects.

In response to a question from Dr Smith, Mr Pearson advised Governors that vocational subjects account for 20-25% of actual results, it has increased steadily in the last 5 years from about 10%. The subjects are now more rigorous, challenging and have an external assessment. Some BTEC provision has been extended for another year although these results do not appear in the league tables. There will be a mixed provision next year. Mr Taylor asked if students coming to the college are given information about the reform in BTEC subjects. Mr Pearson confirmed that students are given the information and that the college tries to predict changes. Students are advised on which universities accept BTEC qualifications.

c) Post Results update on subject areas.

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 2020.

Green = Subjects which have few concerns because in year actions appear to be having a positive effect to improve U6 outcomes for 2020.

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.

The overall analysis shows that A level and Diploma remain strong and are very similar to last year's results.

A level pass rate (A*- E) 98.1% High Grades (A*-B) 51%

Alps Value Added is lower this year than in the previous 3 years. It is now Grade 5 rather than Grade 4. Some colleges have slipped from a Grade 2 to Grade 4 or even 5, there has been volatility due to the move to linearity. It is felt that the college has maintained a good level.

Some of the factors that may have affected the reduction of A Level Value Added include the following:

- The raising of entry requirements for this year group which has increased the students' average GCSE points score compared to previous years.
- Stricter adherence to higher entry requirements.
- An increase in the percentage of students who are following a mixed study programme (34.45% in 2017/2018 to 41.1% in 2018/2019).
- New linear qualifications in some subjects which have traditionally performed well

Diploma Pass Rate 100% High Grades (D* -D) 89%
Alps Value Added is Grade 2 once again this year.

There followed a discussion of subjects causing concern in September 2019 and of subjects being closely monitored. The paper will be circulated to all governors.

Ms Vitti provided an update on new linear subjects where improvements had been made or results maintained as well as where they had declined.

Dr Smith left the meeting whilst this item was being discussed.

Dr Beatty asked if the committee was asking the right questions to see that improvement is being made at the college. Mr Pearson felt that the committee was making sure that the college is responding to linearity and that progress is being made/ has been made in subjects that were causing concern. Mr Martin asked if things would even out in future years as more subjects become linear. Ms Vitti replied that in the first year for some linear subjects Alps had improved but the goalposts keep moving, plus there had been some teaching and learning issues in a particular subject. She added that in two years time there should be more consistency. Mr Taylor asked does the information provided to Governors enable Governors to carry out their role effectively. He added that he thought the reports provided were really useful. Mr Pearson replied that the college provide an over-view of what is important. Mr Harris felt that Alps was only part of the story and that details of the enrichment programme should be provided for future meetings. Mr Pearson replied that he includes this information in his termly report to the Governing Body. Ms Vitti agreed to remind Governors of this information in next year's report to the committee. Governors noted that 6 students had gone to Oxbridge this year and a further 9 were studying to be doctors or dentists.

7. COLLEGE FOCUS 2018/2019

Ms Vitti advised Governors that the college would continue to focus on value added for those in the middle or upper bands. The college has issued Guiding Principles and a great deal of work and staff training has been done to improve lessons. Staff meetings are now held when all staff are in college during a common meeting slot.

In this academic year there is a whole college approach on independent learning, focusing on sharpening the culture of individual learning with particular reference to the following areas for improvement:

- i) Students to reflect on how they learn.
- ii) To set high expectations for student effort.
- iii) Guidance to students for their next step.

Dr Beatty asked students for their views on how they saw things. They confirmed that the strategies outlined above were working and that staff were adapting to the new college focus.

8. SECTION 48 INSPECTION

Ms Vitti advised Governors that the Guidance for Colleges has not yet been finalised. Mr Bailey (Assistant Principal) has been attending various meetings and the following are likely to be included in the guidance:

- a) Student Questionnaire on Religious Studies and Ethics
- b) Parent Questionnaire
- c) It was suggested that we identify a Governor link for mission and ethos (possibly a parent governor)

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the work of the Mission Group set up within the college to look at how the college is doing against the required standard is working well. The group will be extended to include students and staff not involved in teaching RE. He added that the new college Chaplain will play a major part in the preparation for the Section 48 Inspection. She has already implemented a quiet minds meditation at 8.30am and changed the location of the Chaplain office so that student and staff can drop in.

The Student Governors felt that 8.30am for quiet minds meditation is not the best

It was agreed that the item would be kept on the agenda for future meetings.

9. CURRICULUM ISSUES

- i) Mr Pearson gave Governors an update on BTEC reforms. The college decided to stay with the old system and has one more year from entry date to run.
- ii) Some subject areas are becoming less popular and the college will need to keep a careful eye on how this develops.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no Any Other Business.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4 February 2020 at 4.30pm

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____