AQUINAS COLLEGE
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Date: 2 July 2024
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Mr L Byrne, Mr T P McGee, Mrs J Miller and Dr A Smith.

Mr L Byrne in the Chair

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr D Pearson Principal

Mr A Bailey Vice Principal

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Mr Byrne.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies was received and accepted from Mr G Hynes and Mr M Taylor.

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. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the Agenda for the meeting.

6. ADMISSIONS 2024/2025

Mr Pearson advised Governors that 3076 students, which is the most applications that the college had received had applied to the college for a place in September 2024, this included 228 late applications.

Whilst a numbers of students had made multi applications to various colleges, 2049 students were holding an offer for the college. This number included 1133 category 1 and 916 category 2 students. The conversion rate is between 62% and 68% with an average of 65%, this would give between 1250 and 1300 students in L6. The U6 could be around 1200 students. This would give a total of between 2450 and 2500 students excluding Pathway students (30), which is where the college wants to be. The funding for the year will be based on 2395 students.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the total number at the start of the academic year could be around 2500 giving a total of 2450 students by the census date in October 2024. Mr Pearson reminded Governors that the number of students on roll on the census date determines the funding for the college for the next financial year. The college is likely to over recruit for September 2024 which could mean an increase in class size for some subjects. There are some specialist subject areas where it is not possible to increase the class size. The average class size is 27 students.

Many of those students who are shown as undecided did put the college down as their first choice.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that there were no major concerns and the college was on track to achieve the numbers outlined above. He added that he did not think there would be a need to go to the waiting list. Dr Smith asked if there were late applications from feeder schools. Mr Pearson replied that students at partner schools had no excuse for a late application because they are sent reminders of the date that the applications should be submitted. Category 1 late application would get priority over others on the waiting list.

The new build will not be completed by September 2024, whilst the new build would provide an additional 300 places it is not planned to increase by that number. The aim is for controlled growth over the next 5 years with an increase of 40/50 students per year. Mr Pearson advised Governors that the number of students in the cohort continue to increase until 2030. He added that both Loreto and Xaverian are increasing their capacity. It was noted that Stockport students mainly stay within Stockport at post 16.

Mr McGee asked if the recruitment of staff had been difficult. Mr Pearson replied that all colleges started the recruitment process earlier than normal to enable them to appoint the best staff. He added that one member of staff had submitted a late resignation and had asked to be released early. The college had agreed that they could be released if a suitable appointment could be made. However, it had not been possible to make an appointment".

RESOLVED: That the above strategies be noted.

7. PUBLICITY

a) Mr Pearson circulated sample of the ways in which the college publicises what it has to offer. These include the College Prospectus, College Magazine, Adult Education Prospectus and flyers, good luck and birthday cards, pens and pencils.

b) Website - Mr Pearson advised Governors that a new college website would be launched early next year. A redesign, in conjunction with a strategic plan, will help to prune the site so the content is relevant and useful to our website visitors.

c) Open Days – The college reviews its message to prospective students in terms of results and personal development. The college is performing as well as other colleges in the area. Mr McGee added that the college must take nearly all the cohort in Stockport. Mr Pearson replied that the college takes about 70% of the Stockport cohort plus students from High Peak, Buxton, Tameside and other areas in Greater Manchester.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the more able students will make applications to Aquinas, Loreto and Xaverian. 1702 students put the college down as their first choice and 1230 students accepted invitations to the Welcome Days. Dr Smith added that the majority of students in Greater Manchester want to attend Catholic sixth form colleges.

Mr Bailey advised Governors that meetings had been held with Heads of Year in the local secondary schools to explain what the college has to offer. Meetings had also been held with

Careers Advisers. The meetings had addressed some of the myths that exist about the college. Mrs Miller added that the Laurus Trust in Cheadle Hulme are targeting students who would normally go to St James RC High School. Mr Pearson advised Governors that the college usually take about 100 students from Harrytown RC High School and 70 students from St James RC High School. Mr Bailey referred to a non Catholic school in Chapel-en-le-Frith where students are unlikely to progress to sixth from education and where families do not encourage them to pursue education. He added that Mrs Taylor, Head of RE at the college was working with feeder schools on what the college has to offer,

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Policy Reviews.

The following policies had been reviewed by members of the Committee:

i) Safer Recruitment ii) Staff Code of Conduct iii) Data Protection

iv) IT Acceptable Use including AI v) Behaviour

RESOLVED: That the above policies as amended be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy had still to be reviewed.

The Chairperson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and hope that they had a good summer.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8 October 2024 at 4.30pm

Signed _____ Date _____

Chairperson