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Academic Committee

Minutes

Meeting Time and Date	1000 on 5 March 2024
Meeting Location	Zoom Online
Members	Heather Barrett-Mold OBE (Chair until Item 13)  Roger McClure (Co-opted / Acting Chair from Item 13)  Sheila Cunningham (Vice Chair) Darrell DeSouza OBE  Lorna Fitzjohn Sarah Moreland MBE  Joanne Roxburgh  Stephen Way  Peter Brammall (Principal)  Zoe Halfyard (Staff Governor)  Milana Uginciute (Student Governor)  Richard Elliott (Student Governor)  Alexis Malpica (Student Governor) 
Observers	Paulina Balogun  Heather Marks James Bryan (HR)  Paul Smith (Deputy Principal) Denise Lloyd (Vice Principal) 
Minute Taker	Joanne Coffey (Director of Governance) 
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	Action
1. Apologies 1.1. Apologies were received for Sheila Cunningham, Lorna Fitzjohn, Heather Marks and Paul Smith.	
2. Declaration of Interests 2.1. None.	
3. Minutes 3.1. Lesson Observations had been introduced to replace the formal learning walks. Governors requested an update to how this new process was being received by staff. 3.2. Feedback from the Staff Council was that this process was going well but that some teachers had requested further support and training, to provide more guidance during their observations. 3.3. The Vice Principal agreed to discuss this further with staff and pass the feedback onto the Quality Team.*	*Vice Principal

<p>Resolved to</p> <p>3.4. Agree the minutes of the Academic Committee meeting held on 20 November 2023 as a correct record and authorise the Chair to approve them.</p>	
<p>4. Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1. Discussions were continuing with Barking Riverside, for the College to provide horticulture and animal management courses.</p> <p>4.2. Although the potential Barking Riverside opportunity was being led by the Estates Committee, Governors queried if the Academic Committee should also be involved.</p> <p>4.3. A previous Principal, who was in place when negotiations began and knew the site well, was providing support to the College on this project, which would be brought to all Governors at the Strategy Day in March 2024.</p>	
<p>5. Report of the Vice Principal (Information)</p> <p><u>Position Statement</u></p> <p>5.1. The Committee received the latest draft of the College's Position Statement, which had 5 key themes that articulated distance travelled since the last Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>5.2. The Statement was a live document updated on a weekly basis and Governors were invited to offer any suggested improvements to the Vice Principal.</p> <p><u>Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA)</u></p> <p>5.3. The key academic focus continued to be improving TLA and all assessments had now taken place. A total of 76 staff had been observed during term 1, with a further 117 learning walks taking place.</p> <p>5.4. 81% (55) of lesson observations met expectations, 19% (13) did not meet expectations and 8 staff had supportive observations.</p> <p>5.5. Quality Practitioner (QP) support and developmental action plans were in place for all staff who did not meet expectations.</p> <p>5.6. Lesson observation forms and feedback had been standardised for robustness.</p> <p>5.7. In terms of impact, the January 2024 student survey showed significant progress with 92% of students assessing teaching as good and helps them make progress on their course, and 94% agreeing that they were learning new skills.</p> <p>5.8. Targeted staff development sessions had taken place in November 2023 and January 2024 to upskill staff. A further session was planned in March, to consolidate, share impact, develop next steps and build in wellbeing and team-building.</p> <p>5.9. Quality Practitioners and learning support staff are offering training sessions to staff to help support staff understanding how</p>	

<p>best to meet student needs, such as dyslexia, and more focus was being spent discussing pedagogy.</p> <p>5.10. Governors felt that solid progress was being made.</p> <p><u>Attendance and Progress</u></p> <p>5.11. To date, compared to the equivalent point in the previous year, 16-18 attendance was tracking slightly behind at 81.1%. However, 19+ attendance was equal at 87.6%. High needs attendance and Apprentices attendance is higher than this time last year.</p> <p>5.12. The College had put in place a host of activities to improve attendance, particularly focused on maths and English where attendance was most challenging.</p> <p>Paulina Balogun joined the meeting.</p> <p>5.13. In addition to the current interventions, Governors suggested showing the monitored students the plan in place, to get them on board and feel motivated to work together to improve their attendance.*</p> <p><u>LSIP Academic Curriculum Projects</u></p> <p>5.14. £568K had been allocated from Local London and West London LSIP projects to invest and develop Digital and Green skills for the College that needs to be used by March 2024.</p> <p>5.15. The Digital proposal was to create an immersive suite and Augmented Reality (AR) at the Enfield and our Gunnersbury Park campuses.</p> <p>5.16. This allocation needed to be spent by April 2024, which the College were on track to meet.</p> <p><u>Recruitment</u></p> <p>5.17. 16 -18 applications for September 2024 were currently 15.7% (+48) higher than the same time in the previous year and 19+ applications were currently 44.8% (+81) higher.</p> <p>Alexis Malpica joined the meeting.</p> <p>5.18. Reliable data was now in place to facilitate more accurate keep-warm and readiness activities for new students. 'Get Ready for Capel' now had a wider, cross-College approach, to meet more peers and gain a broader insight.</p> <p>5.19. The online course booking system was now more effective and able to on-board students in a timely manner.</p> <p>5.20. HE recruitment numbers had continued to reduce, which Governors found disappointing as it had previously been an area of steady growth.</p> <p>5.21. The HE partnership with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) was now only being served by Capel, as the RAU were keen to work uniquely with the College's diverse student cohort.</p>	<p>*Vice Principal</p>
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<p>5.22. More strategic work was being planned on assessing the suitability of the HE courses being offered, with suggestions including offering a flexible, modulated approach with HE being an option to upskill from Level 3.</p> <p>5.23. Governors queried the exploration of other potential partners, which had been actioned to complete by June 2024. This was being considered at the Strategy Day in March as part of the curriculum evolution over the next 3 years.</p> <p>5.24. Once implemented, new HE courses would require a 2 year lead time, for new delivery from 2025. Joanne Roxburgh agreed to take part in any future working groups for HE delivery.*</p> <p>5.25. A new AI policy for staff and students had been created and was being embedded into the curriculum.</p> <p>5.26. Heather Barrett-Mold suggested that the College could be involved with the London Nature Recovery Strategy and agreed to discuss further with the Vice Principal.*</p> <p>Stephen Way joined the meeting.</p> <p>5.27. The Vice Principal was thanked for all the ongoing improvements that had been made.</p>	<p>*Vice Principal</p> <p>*Vice Principal</p>
<p>6. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) January 2024 Update (Decision)</p> <p>6.1. The College was monitoring key performance indicators during the quality performance reviews (QPR) which took place every 6 weeks. The aim was for the College to demonstrate making at least reasonable progress during the Ofsted six monthly monitoring visit.</p> <p>6.2. The key five themes for improvement were: Ambitious curriculum; student attendance; providing developmental feedback; teachers understanding EHCP's; improved English and maths.</p> <p>6.3. Lots of additional training had been put in place to support teachers with these themes, which would be audited through learning walks to measure how supported students feel.</p> <p>6.4. There had already been a 3% increase in students stating that the developmental feedback had helped them improve.</p> <p>6.5. Additional learning support was being increased, including for High Needs students' outside of the classroom, to provide a more holistic experience.</p> <p>6.6. There had been significant progress with apprenticeship reviews, to ensure they were being carried within 4 weeks of their placement.</p> <p>6.7. The impact of the current changes would be measureable in the next two months.</p> <p><u>Attendance Strategies</u></p> <p>6.8. English and maths attendance was the main focus of the curriculum team, Strategies included sandwiching sessions</p>	

<p>between vocational lessons and having an allocated English and maths mentor to better impact students in the classroom.</p> <p>6.9. An expected increase in English and maths hours from 2024-25, being proposed by the DfE, was a concern that was being monitored in curriculum planning sessions.</p> <p>6.10. The Committee had a full discussion about the reasons behind why students did not attend. There were a broad range of reasons, including sickness, transport/travel constraints and personal issues.</p> <p>6.11. Many students also felt that, after studying maths and English for 5 years at school, they did not see that any further benefit being achieved.</p> <p>6.12. The College did, however, work hard to explain that maths and English was a critical employment skill, leading to better job opportunities and higher salaries.</p> <p>6.13. Governors queried whether there was enough contextualisation of these fundamental skills within the curriculum. It was confirmed that maths and English was embedded into the vocational lessons and referred to at the time, in order to link students back to the dedicated lessons.</p> <p>6.14. A Student Governor voiced concerns that students who needed special access in exams did not consistently receive it. It was explained that access arrangements did require an initial tutor assessment, prior to an exam board assessment, but that it should then be provided for all exams. The Vice Principal agreed to personally deal with a case that the Student Governor referred to.</p> <p>6.15. A Student Governor felt that the courses that were only available at one campus, created long travel times for students. This, along with the time constraints of the curriculum, impacted on low attendance as momentum waned.</p> <p>6.16. Tutors were now offering more digital online classes to address travel burdens, which had improved attendance. Governors suggested moving some courses to Regent's Park, which was more central. This would be helpful to students outside of Enfield but would impact the larger Enfield cohort.</p> <p>6.17. It was not possible to offer all courses at all campuses due to the need for specialist science teachers and labs. Immersive teaching was being delivered at Enfield and Gunnersbury Park and this would be rolled out to all campuses.</p> <p>6.18. Governors queried if parental engagement was included in attendance strategies. This was in place via text messages to parents, who welcomed being involved.</p> <p>6.19. It was recognised that exam retakes could make students more anxious and that this could also impact on attendance.</p>	
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<p><u>Maths and English</u></p> <p>6.20. Governor, Paulina Balogun, agreed to share a link to a maths hub for teacher which included a two year free CPD programme. The strategies recognised the difference in teaching 16+ students, who may not feel as committed to achieve.*</p> <p>6.21. It was clarified that the College's Maths Team was proactive and that they were sharing best practice with the English tutors.</p> <p>6.22. Student Governors queried the necessity to take maths and English tests prior to starting their course. This was an initial assessment to tailor lessons to stretch and challenge individual needs, where possible.</p> <p>6.23. The Vice Principal agreed to communicate the reasoning more clearly to new students, in order to understand the impact.*</p> <p>6.24. At the last Ofsted visit, not enough stretch and challenge had been witnessed in classrooms. Teachers were now aiming higher - to train students beyond being able to pass their courses.</p> <p><u>Achievement</u></p> <p>6.25. As there were clear differences in achievement between campuses, more analysis was being performed to share best practice through collaborative thinking and competitive challenge.</p> <p>6.26. It was confirmed that national achievement benchmarks for 2021-22 were being used on the Pro-achieve system but the 2022 -23 rates had not yet been made public.</p> <p>Resolved to</p> <p>6.27. Accept the updates to the QIP 2023-24 and recommend it to the Governing Body for approval.</p>	<p>*Vice Principal (Completed)</p> <p>*Vice Principal</p> <p>A: Governing Body (Appendix I)</p>
<p>7. Verbal Update of the Safeguarding Link Governors (Information)</p> <p>7.1. Heather Barrett-Mold and Stephen Way are the College's Safeguarding Link Governors, who meet regularly with the Vice Principal and the College's Safeguarding officer.</p> <p>7.2. At their recent meeting, the single central record was checked and recent and historical safeguarding issues, and the handling of them, was discussed.</p> <p>7.3. The new mental health training programme was assessed to ensure that sufficient expertise and mental health first aiders were in place.</p> <p>7.4. 45 staff had been trained as Mental Health First Aiders. All staff had now received more thorough training to be able to differentiate between safeguarding and mental health issues, which had been well received.</p> <p>7.5. The Safeguarding Team had received training for trauma informed practice.</p>	

<p>7.6. The Safeguarding Link Governors assured the Committee that the College's safeguarding processes were all robust and working well.</p>	
<p>8. Academic Principal Risks (Decision)</p> <p>8.1. The risk around safety and site security had risen due to a series of long standing thefts at the College.</p> <p>Resolved to</p> <p>8.2. Note and agree to the Academic Principal Risks.</p>	
<p>9. Learner Satisfaction Induction Survey 2022-23 (Information)</p> <p><u>Response Rates</u></p> <p>9.1. The student induction survey targeted 1,895 students of which 1,590 students completed (83.9%) the survey. This consisted of both full time and part time students across all campuses.</p> <p>9.2. The response rate of 83.9% was a 12.2% increase on 2022-23 (71.7%).</p> <p>9.3. Through investing in the student voice, a new Student Common Room at Enfield was due to open in April 2024, which would make a huge improvement to the student experience.</p> <p>9.4. Student Governors also acknowledged that many improvements were being made at the Crystal Palace campus.</p> <p>9.5. Governors felt that the rag rating in the report could be removed as it was not deemed particularly useful.*</p> <p>9.6. It was confirmed that the survey was anonymous, apart from campus and academic area, to facilitate need. The Heads of School would then feedback the results to their students to triangulate priorities.</p> <p>9.7. Management recognised the need to get better at communicating what the student says and the impact of that.</p> <p><u>Key findings</u></p> <p>9.8. Overall, 88% of students responded that they were enjoying College, this was a decrease of 2.9% compared to 2022-23. Further analysis was taking place to highlight sites/groups to ensure any issues are addressed in a timely fashion</p> <p>9.9. Between 80-89% of students were positive about enrolment processes, and 86-95% of students were positive about induction processes, at the College.</p> <p>9.10. Disappointingly, only 71% of students stated that work/industry placement details were made clear to them. This is an area identified on the QIP that the College need to improve.</p> <p>9.11. Safeguarding and Wellbeing at Capel received 91-93% positive feedback.</p>	<p>*Vice Principal</p>

<p>9.12. 78% answered if they don't attend College someone contacts them.</p> <p>9.13. Governors noted that only 91.3% of students stated that they felt safe at College. This would be monitored against the new plans to improve security at all campuses.</p> <p>9.14. Governors noted a potential discrepancy between the percentage rates for all students against the breakdown. The Vice Principal agreed to check and report back any significant discrepancies.*</p> <p>9.15. The Staff Governor noted that data could sometimes be skewed if N/A was calculated as 'disagree' within the results. As N/A should remain a standalone option to discount the result, the Vice Principal would work with the Staff Governor to check that data was being correctly assigned.*</p>	<p>*Vice Principal</p> <p>*Vice Principal</p>
<p>10. Student Disciplinary Report (Information)</p> <p>10.1. There were 10 resolved Gross Misconduct Disciplinary Hearings for the year to date, compared to 16 incidents in the same time of the previous academic year.</p>	
<p>11. Student Complaints Report (Information)</p> <p>11.1. There had been 2 resolved complaints and one pending complaint, for the current year.</p> <p>11.2. It was noted that this was a very low number of complaints compared nationally with other colleges.</p>	
<p>12. AOB</p> <p>12.1. To provide more stretch and challenge support*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sarah Moreland agreed to supply information about Leaf Education for maths to the Vice Principal. b) She also suggested that the Wildlife Trust may be able to provide field trip opportunities and guest speakers, to align with animal care ecology. <p>12.2. Roger McClure agreed to share information on GCSE grants with the Vice Principal.*</p> <p>12.3. Student Governors were keen to provide more feedback and suggestions to the Vice Principal regarding the broader Ready for Capel activities and supporting other students in class.*</p> <p>12.4. Governor, Paulina Balogun, was welcomed back to the Committee and the College, after a planned leave of absence.</p>	<p>*Vice Principal</p> <p>*Vice Principal</p> <p>*Vice Principal</p>
<p>13. Presentation by Kirsty Steer, Director of Quality Improvement</p> <p>As the Chair needed to leave the meeting during the presentation, Roger McClure was co-opted (from Observer) to the meeting and made Acting Chair.</p>	

13.1. Kirsty Steer gave an in-depth presentation on quality improvement strategies that were in place at the College, along with future plans.	
14. Date of next meeting 14.1. The next Academic Committee meeting will take place on Monday 17 June, 2024 at 1000.	

APPROVED MINUTES			
CHAIR:	Heather Barrett-Mold	DATE:	17 June 2024
APPROVAL:	Remote confirmation: Approved. Or signed:		