



**WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Wednesday 24th February 2016 at 5.00pm.

BOARD MEMBERS John Holford (Chair)
PRESENT: Dame Asha Khemka DBE
Cllr Diana Meale

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal Teaching & Learning
Paul Rana, Head of Student Services
Eleanor Taylor, Head of Higher Education & International
Julian Walden, Head of School Construction & Building Services
Louise Knott, Director for Communications, Marketing & Learner Engagement

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
16.01	<u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u>		
	The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interests in any matters to be discussed. No interests were declared.		
16.02	<u>WELCOME INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>		
	Apologies for absence were received from Nick Golubs and Elaine Martin.		
16.03	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH DECEMBER 2015 & ANY MATTERS ARISING</u>		
	The minutes were reviewed and one amendment was requested on page 4. The penultimate paragraph should read that Pearson 'validate' rather than 'provide' HNCs and HNDs at level 4 and 5. The Clerk confirmed that this amendment would be made to the minutes. Save for this change the minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.		
	AGREED: to approve the content of the minutes of the meeting held on 10 th December 2015.		
	There were no matters arising.		

Q = an example of governor questioning
CH = an example of governor challenge

Signed : _____ **Chair**

Date:

16.04 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Members reviewed the update provided and were happy with the progress being made.

AGREED: to note the content of the table presented.

16.05 DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew members' attention to a number of key points.

a) Inspection 2012 – areas for improvement and progress.

Members' attention was drawn to appendix A which was described as an 'ongoing document which is updated every 6 months'. Page 9 of the report summarises the key improvement areas and the current position in relation to each. Section 2.2 of the report details areas for improvement which were specific to the curriculum areas inspected, again an update on these with a summary on the current position is given in appendix A.

b) Ofsted Chief Inspector Report

In the executive summary, the report finds that the majority of general FE colleges inspected in the 14/15 year were judged less than good with only 35% judged good or outstanding. This reflects the fact that general FE colleges are struggling on a number of fronts. It was confirmed that the statistics include colleges which were also re-inspected. The comment was made that 'Apprentices should be an aspirational route chosen by many young people but this is undermined by the local quality of much of what is on offer'. This comment reflects the fact that apprenticeships are a key focus for Ofsted. Members' attention was also drawn to section 3.3 of the report which identifies a number of key matters including problems with English and maths, financial pressures, inability of many FE colleges to successfully adapt the delivery of GCSE English and maths and weaker apprenticeship provision than required. One part of the report notes that high quality apprenticeships were typically found in industries that have a lot of established reliance on employing apprentices to develop their future workforce.

c) Personal development, behaviour and welfare (student disciplinary)

The new judgement in the Ofsted CIF, 'personal development' behaviour and welfare' includes reference to behaviour and conduct. Inspectors will judge whether learners comply with any guidelines for behaviour and conduct stipulated by providers or employers and manage their own feelings and behaviour at work and during learning lessons. In general students comply with College guidelines for behaviour and conduct,

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however there are exceptions which do not meet the required standard. The College has a student code of conduct and disciplinary procedure which outlines expectations in terms of conduct. The College always works on the basis of positive behaviour management rather than the disciplinary route where possible. The aim is to support students in their understanding of what is and isn't appropriate in a College environment and in an employment setting. The disciplinary procedure has two elements, informal and formal. The informal element is used to address minor misdemeanours which are dealt with by the tutors. There are three stages to the formal procedure which may result in formal warnings. The final stage (stage 3) may lead to a student going to a formal disciplinary panel which may result in a final written warning or exclusion.

There have been eight stage 3 disciplinary panel hearings during the period September to December 2015. Of these, three students have been excluded from the College for a number of reasons, including physical assault on another student, violent behaviour towards another student and theft of another students bicycle. It was explained that using the discipline system effectively enables the College in the vast majority of instances to support students and only in extreme cases is there an exclusion.

- Q Members reviewed the statistics provided at paragraph 4.6 and questioned whether the high number of stage 1 and 2s recorded in the Care and Education Studies and Lifestyle areas is because of high student numbers or other reasons. It was explained that Health and Social Studies and the Lifestyle provision tend to be very female orientated and can involve groups of girls acting inappropriately together. It was also explained that in the Lifestyle area the team may use stage 1s to tackle poor attendance whereas others don't, and that this reflects the commercial nature of the environment here. It was explained that on the whole, student behaviour is exemplary. Members also commented that there appeared to be a high number of incidents for Engineering and Transport skills, they questioned whether the statistics include VSS students. It was confirmed that VSS students are excluded from this data.
- Q It was explained that staff in this area have started to use the disciplinary process more effectively and as a consequence this has led to an increase in the number of incidents recorded.

d) Blended learning

The FELTAG report outlined the need to nudge the culture of the FE and skills sector towards more extensive and effective use of virtual blended and online learning of all kinds – whether academic or vocational – and taking account of the different needs of different learners. In order to move the agenda forward, the College is part of a consortium of colleges working together to develop online learning materials. As part of the curriculum planning process for 16/17, it has been agreed that a proportion of level 3 and level 2 programmes will be delivered through

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online learning. For level 2 programmes, 30 hours will be online and for level 3 programmes, 60 hours per year. The delivery of blended learning for level 1 programmes is optional at this stage and will be developed over time. The inclusion of blended learning as part of HE programmes will be developed as validation allows i.e. this will be included as part of new validations and on a rolling programme as awards are revalidated with university partners.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.06 QIP 2015/16 PROGRESS UPDATE

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew members' attention to page 21 which summarises the key actions. It was noted that an update for February 2016 is provided in each section of the QIP. The Deputy Principal provided assurance that she was confident that all areas were being addressed. Members were advised that an update on the QIP position would be provided to the next meeting.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.07 QUALITY REPORT

The Principal indicated that she would wish to withdraw the report provided from this meeting. She indicated that following a review of the report she feels that it is not appropriate for discussion and it needs to be revisited and rewritten with a clear focus on quality. Generally, the paper is too cumbersome in its writing with a lack of focus on the issues to be identified for governor knowledge. The level of information provided does not assist governors in their ability to track and monitor progress. In addition there are a number of inconsistencies to be addressed which require clarity, these include:

- Executive summary – with regard to the data dashboard and the number of students these are inconsistent, they are included as numbers but then jump from numbers to percentages midway through thus causing confusion.
- Paragraph 5.3 retention by study programme – there is a mismatch between the data in this section and the data included within appendix A. The School of Learning referred to is also incorrectly named.
- 6.2 early leavers' data – included within the withdrawal numbers are those who never attended and those who were not allowed to enrol. This is therefore an inaccurate representation of the number of actual withdrawals.
- 6.6 volume of leavers – again there is a mismatch between the information given in this section and that presented in appendix A.

Director
Q&A

June 2016

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- Pages 51 and 52 – the data is confusing and does not address the apprenticeship framework, actual and timely success rates, NVQs in the workplace.

The Principal advised that the Deputy Principal has been asked to review the report and ensure key issues are clear for Governors, together with an explanation regarding ‘the what and the why and actions being taken to address the areas of concern’. The Deputy Principal confirmed that she would provide an updated quality report as soon as possible, this would be circulated outside the meeting rather than waiting for the date of the next meeting.

DP: T&L

April 2016

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.08 SUCCESS RATES

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and confirmed that this report is an update on information already provided to the Board regarding success rate data for 2014/15. Members attention was drawn to a number of key matters:

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- Paragraph 2.3 – it was explained that the publication of national rates has been delayed and therefore the College is still comparing the current position with 13/14 benchmarks. The Committee questioned whether this was impacting upon the College’s capacity to know its own position. It was explained that there is no real impact as the College continues to always compare itself on a year by year basis so that it is clear regarding its own trends irrespective of the national position.
- Classroom based learning by age excluding functional skills – when performance is analysed (excluding functional skills) the College performs well with success for 16-18 and 19+ cohorts together at 89% being 4% above national success. However, there is a 3% decline in performance from the previous years at 83% for 16-18 students with 4,468 leavers but this is still 2% above the national rate. This slight decline is due to a 1% decline in both achievement and retention. Adult success has remained static at 93% which is 5% points above the national success rate.
- Classroom based learning success – all ages by level including functional skills – the success rates for level 1, 2 and 3 for 16-18 year olds were below the national rate. At level 1 and 2 the low success rates are due to lower functional skills success rates. At level 3 the key issues were with AS level and some level 3 vocational qualifications.
- Classroom based learning success, all ages by level excluding functional skills – headline performance all ages excluding functional skills is 89% with 12,596 leavers being 4% above national success. Entry levels 1 and 2 are all performing at or above national success. Both 16-18 and 19+ provision are above their respective national rates.

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- Section 4.6 summarises the apprenticeships 3 year trend data and national success by levels. It was confirmed that this information is broken down by each level of apprenticeships.
- Timely success for apprenticeships – the most significant overall category is level 2 apprenticeships with 3,471 leavers and success at 80% being 11% above national success. Timely success in relation to all apprenticeships has improved from 62% to 68% with 4,417 leavers, 13% above national success. The most significant timely category is level 2 apprenticeships with 3,401 leavers and at 73% success is an improvement of 6% on 2013/14 and 17% above national success. Timely success at level 3 has declined to 51% and is 3% below national success with 1,009 leavers.

Q/CH

In reviewing the statistics, the Committee commented that the timely success for higher level apprenticeships has dipped significantly and they questioned why and challenged the College to improve this. It was explained that there are only seven students within this cohort and therefore any decline in performance effects percentages very quickly. It was acknowledged that in terms of overall success and timely success the position regarding advanced/high level apprenticeships is an area to improve.

Q

The Committee indicated that in previous meetings the College had indicated that they were struggling to recruit suitable teachers to deliver functional skills, they questioned whether the position had now improved. The Deputy Principal indicated that the College is making 'small steps'. They did recruit some new staff for this academic year but have had to release two in the probationary period. In addition, there are more long standing members of staff who have resigned at the end of last term as a result of being at the end of capability procedures. The Committee was advised that the College has a maths graduate who has been an excellent appointment.

Assurance was given to the Committee that the College is doing everything it can and that the standards of teaching and learning are improving. The College is getting a lot of positive feedback from students. What is being seen is a consistent message now from all staff regarding the importance of maths and English.

Q

Members considered section 7.5 of the report and questioned why the success rates are so bad in relation to overall success percentages for maths. It was explained that students simply really struggled with the exam. It was noted that there is a doubling in the number of students who are required to continue to take maths and English GCSE. The doubling of numbers over a two year period coincides with a significant decline in success rates. The Committee commented that they would find it interesting to see whether the national benchmarks dip generally in this area, however they challenged that even if they do it is not an excuse and all College staff must work hard to address this issue. This is

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an area that will impact upon the College's ability to move to an outstanding position and therefore needs to be fully understood. It was explained that 40% of students came to College in 14/15 without maths and English and this percentage has again increased for 15/16.

Members' attention was drawn to appendix A which explains how the QAR will be developed. It was felt that this information would be more relevant when published.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.09 STUDY PROGRAMMES

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and confirmed that study programmes, including English and maths and work placements/work experience, are a critical inspection focus and as a consequence an update will be provided at every Committee meeting. The Committee questioned whether the governing body as a whole are fully aware of its importance. It was acknowledged that a briefing session had been provided but the Committee felt that it would be useful to provide a refresher/update.

Q

DP: T&L

Each Meeting

Key matters brought to members attention from the report included were:

- Section 2 – all students aged 16-19 are expected to follow a study programme tailored to their prior attainment by age 16 and future education and career aspirations.
- Section 3 - retention and attendance – the statistics show that retention and attendance whilst lower than vocational areas, is not as bad as originally feared. It was explained that the data provided relates to students still at College after the six week cut off point. Those students who withdraw before the six week date amount to approximately 300 but are not included within the data, the baseline at section 3.1 is students at College after 42 days.
- Section 4 Maths and English
In 2014/15 3,002 enrolled to a 16-19 study programme and of these
 - a) 311 have not attained GCSE A*-C English on entry (but did have maths)
 - b) 258 had not attained GCSE A*-C maths on entry (but did have English)
 - c) 960 had not attained GCSE A*-C English or maths on entry. This equates to 40.9% of entrants not having attained GCSE A*-C English and 39.1% not having attained GCSE A*-C in maths.In 2015/16 281 students enrolled to a 16-19 study programme and of these
 - a) 370 had not attained GCSE A*-C English on entry (but did have maths)

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b) 282 had not attained GCSE A*-C maths on entry (but did have English)

c) 952 had not attained GCSE A*-C English or maths on entry
This equates to 46.9% of entrants not having attained GCSE A*-C English and 43.84% not having attained GCSE A*-C in maths.

Q

The Committee questioned how many students there are at College where English is not their first language. It was explained that the non-white British category is circa 200 and these are likely to be eastern European students with a reasonable assumption that English will not be their first language. In other categories there are only a handful of students. It was accepted that this would not explain the percentage statistics. The Committee all agreed that the most concerning figure was the number of individuals who come to College with neither maths nor English.

Members' attention as drawn to sections 5 & 6 of the report which summarises the improvement strategy in place for maths and English and the staffing issues relating to these areas.

Members reviewed the information provided at section 7 relating to work experience/work placements and it was explained that this is an area of significant focus and an issue for the sector. It was explained that as at 5th February 2016 43.4% of students had already completed or have a confirmed placement to attend. At the end of 14/15 44% of students on study programmes had completed an external work placement. This figure will be exceeded in 2015/16, although it was explained that the College is not confident that it will be able to say that every student has gone on a work placement. In terms of the statistics provided, it was explained that in Care and Education it is mandatory to undertake work experience and work placements for the qualification and therefore the percentage is high. In the lifestyle Academy they have done really well to secure a number of really quality placements.

It was generally explained that providing maths and English is a condition of funding. Providing work experience and work placements is not, however it is an expectation. It was confirmed that this year there has been significant focus by the executive in ensuring that all staff find all students work placements and this includes placements in College.

The Committee was advised that the College does have some students who are not ready for placements but assurance was given that the College is working with them to get them ready and this will certainly be the case for the majority after Easter. Some students refuse to go on placements and in these circumstances the College helps to build their confidence. To support this there are a number of external speakers who are invited in to College to try and give students as wide a level of exposure as possible. There are still some students who lack confidence and presence. The Committee felt that the College may have to look to

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develop students differently in the future on a much more regular basis. They felt that it was important to get some students 'operating outside of their comfort zone' and there may additionally be more to be done in terms of improving their general knowledge. The Deputy Principal confirmed that there may need to be more focus in certain curriculum areas than others. The Principal felt that there was more to be done in terms of developing and utilising the entrepreneur programme and asked that the Deputy Principal and the Head of Student Services take this up as an action point.

Dep P/
Head of SS 2016

CH In terms of improving student confidence and student work skills, the Committee indicated that having identified an issue they would like a better understanding of how this is to be addressed. The Head of Student Services explained that the team have started offering a programme of debate through the wider learning team. It was felt that as part of wider learning, students need to have more clarity regarding how to progress to the next level. The College could improve its communication with students about progression opportunities. The Deputy Principal confirmed that she would discuss this as part of the curriculum managers' forum planned for next week, this would give all staff an opportunity to discuss and share practice.

DP: T&L March
2016

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.10 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY UPDATE

The Director for Communications, Marketing and Learner Engagement introduced this report and key matters were brought to members' attention:

- Staff profile has not changed significantly over the last three years.
- The College's BAME staff profile has slightly increased on the previous year and at 6.2% BAME the College has a staff profile in excess of local population (5.3%) and is in line with its 16-18 on campus student profile (6%)
- At the end of 2014/15, the number of 'unknowns' for sexual orientation had reduced significantly and were at just over 40% unknowns. This has subsequently reduced further and is now 37.5% unknowns (the stonewall benchmark is 50%). Our LGBT profile currently stands at 1.6%
- The team monitor staffing data for a whole range of indicators relating to recruitment, selection, disciplinary and grievances as well as pay. This data is analysed by protected characteristics to highlight any issues of note or of concern. The steering group did not identify any issues of note within the staffing data for 2014/15.
- In terms of the student population the overall BAME profile at 90% is significantly skewed by the apprenticeship provision which has a BAME profile of around 25%. On campus 6% of the

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16-18 student population were from BAME groups. Approximately 20% of the student body declared some form of disability or learning difficulty (which is a pretty steady trend) and approximately 50% of the student body are female except for 24+ apprentices when the general profile is very much weighted towards males (28% female)

- Section 2.6 gives key headlines in terms of outcomes for students. Generally underrepresented groups tend to do better.
- In terms of classroom based provision, the most significant achievement gap relates to white British students who underachieve by 11% against their non-white British counterparts. This gap is widening and is particularly at levels 1 and 2 and more predominantly within the 19+ cohort of students. This is of concern for the College and has been raised and discussed with Heads of School and curriculum managers. It was acknowledged that this gap will be skewed slightly by the numbers in certain groups and categories. To give a clearer picture next year, the College intends to layer on top of this data information regarding free school meals.
- Within Higher Education, across the board achievement gaps have been closed. White British students underperform against their BAME counterparts by 8%, however very low numbers of BAME students within this area are skewing outcomes significantly. Students who declare a disability within HE underperform by 7%, however this gap has been closed by 3% on the previous year as a result of better advice and guidance to HE students regarding their early applications for support.
- Within the apprenticeship provision, females underperform by 6%. This has been narrowed to one partner, London Hair, with the predominance of female students and relatively low success rates. This is an ongoing issue with this particular partner and is being monitored.
- Good progress has been made against the actions identified within the Equality and Diversity action plan
- In January 2016, the College was named 93rd in the Stone Wall top 100 employers and was the only further education college to be named in the list. The College had formal feedback and was pleased that some really good practice had been identified. In terms of the recommendations for improvement, all were felt to be easily achievable.
- Stop racism campaign – in December the College signed up to a national campaign called stop racism. As an organisation you have to sign up to a particular theme and the College has agreed that it will sign up to the theme 'Stopping racism is my responsibility'. The campaign will be launched shortly and will include a tutorial around racism, external speaker input particularly in relation to refugees and immigration as well as interactive displays and stands.

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In general discussion the Committee acknowledged that BME statistics are not solely influenced by ability, there is also culture and expectations to consider, for example outperforming Indian and Chinese students nationally. It was confirmed that the sector as a whole is seeing an improving position in relation to African Caribbean students.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.11 HE UPDATE

The Head of Higher Education and International introduced this item and confirmed

- The report includes an update on student feedback for the autumn term
- The outcomes of the two external reviews (Pearson and University of Derby) were positive.
- The report highlights the College's involvement in the AOC scholarship and also its response to the consultation on the HE green paper and to guidance of the office of independent adjudicator.
- The report includes key points discussed at the HEASC (13th January 2016)

In relation to section 2.1, it was explained that some work has been done in relation to student surveys. The student groups are much smaller this year and unfortunately 10% of the targeted respondents were withdrawn or intercorrelated. Assurance was given that response information is provided to Heads of School and a detailed analysis is completed. This year there has been some positive feedback regarding communication and generally it is believed that the provision is in a strong position.

Q

It was noted that the survey response rate was 66% the Committee questioned whether this was high or low. It was explained that this is lower than the College would like but is not an unreasonable response percentage. Assurance was given that the team continues to do a lot of work to improve the response rate. Members' attention as drawn to section 2.2 which gives a summary of the outcomes.

It was explained that the level of regulatory requirements within the HE sector are getting more stringent. The College is confident that it has robust systems in place and has to be certain in terms of tracking any changes in relation to information provided to students.

It was confirmed that there is a consistent teaching and learning satisfaction rate in terms of student response rate for both FE and HE within College.

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Members' attention was drawn to sections 3 and 4 of the report which provides the outcomes of the two external reviews. Members' attention was also drawn to section 6.2 which provides an update on the OIA requirements and assurance was given that the College will ensure alignment with the guidelines.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.12 **LEARNER VOICE**

The Head of Student Services introduced this item and confirmed that the induction/on programme survey was completed by 3213 students. This represents a 74% return rate which is a positive position. This is far higher than the return rate for 14/15 which was 54.7% and for 13/14 which was 63%. College Your Voice meetings continue to be well attended and contribute towards quality improvement across all College services and teaching and learning.

It was explained that at the time of preparing this report, only classroom based learners had completed the survey, not work based learning. A report on the work based learning position will be reported at the next meeting.

Members' attention was drawn to section 2 of the report which summarises the satisfaction levels and detailed areas that learners felt most satisfied about and also ones where they feel least satisfied. Section 2.3 summarises areas of improvement and concern.

Members' attention was drawn to section 3 of the report which provides an update on the learner voice strategy. It was confirmed that two 'Your Voice' meetings had been held so far with over 70 participants on each occasion. It was noted that two governors attended the second Your Voice meeting (David Overton and Chris Winterton), the Clerk confirmed that all governors are invited to each meeting scheduled. Members reviewed the strategy update provided and it was agreed that with the referendum approaching there should be another push to encourage students to register to vote.

AGREED: to note the updates provided.

16.13 **SAFEGUARDING**

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and key matters noted were:

- To date 260 students have been identified who fall within the categories of current or ex offender, looked after child, not in parental accommodation, young carer or young parent.
- The table at section 3.3 provides a breakdown by category. Retention is good save for looked after children and not in parental accommodation.

Head of SS June 2016

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- Developments with Pro Monitor have been able to improve communication between the curriculum staff and the student transition and targeted support team. This should lead to a more integrated approach to supporting these students.
- Prevent – to date 958 staff have received prevent training either face to face or online. 131 staff are outstanding with this training and further sessions have been arranged for February staff development day. The Clerk was able to confirm that there is 100% governor compliance in relation to prevent training, save for the new governor and two external co-optees appointed last term. She provided assurance that prevent training for these individuals was scheduled.
- Student tutorials/awareness – an excellent programme is in place.
- In January 2016, members of the executive team and other key staff from across the College completed the Project Argus training. Project Argus is a multimedia terrorist attack simulation aimed at considering the implications for the organisation in preventing and surviving a terrorist attack.
- Safeguarding development plan 2015/16 – progress has been made against all elements of the plan and there are no issues of concern
- Section 6.2 provides a summary of the number of safeguarding incidents between 1st September 2015 and 31st January 2016. Members were asked to compare the data with page 111 which reports on the prior year position. It was noted that the number of incidents has increased significantly and as a consequence the College is now in the process of appointing a separate safeguarding officer. There is a national trend regarding increased mental health issues. It was explained that there appears to be more students willing to disclose issues than in prior years. The Committee felt that whilst there may be better reporting, they challenged the senior team to be aware that it may also be that there is a higher incidence of problems and issues. They felt that they as a Committee and the Board generally need to satisfy themselves that it is a positive position in terms of reporting rather than a worrying increase in the number of safeguarding incidents.

CH

The Deputy Principal explained how the safeguarding team operate and the processes. It was agreed that there was a need to continue to monitor safeguarding as an area of concern (in terms of the reported statistics and not the processes in place). The Committee asked that at some point in 2016 they receive a report detailing the impact that recruiting the new safeguarding officer appointment has had.

Deputy
Principal

2016

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.14 **AOB**

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As a matter of additional business, governors discussed Committee membership and agreed that they would like to directly target an individual to join the Committee who has school experience. It was suggested that Chris Hatherall, the new Principal at Vision Studio School, should be co-opted. The Committee were entirely supportive of this and agreed to make the recommendation to the Board that he be appointed. An alternative was suggested as John Crone at Quarrydale. It was agreed to approach Chris Hatherall in the first instance and hold John Crone as an alternative if Chris Hatherall is unable to take up the position.

AGREED: to recommend that Chris Hatherall be appointed as a Standards Committee co-optee.

16.15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk confirmed that the next scheduled meeting is 9th June 2016.

Meeting closed at 6.55pm.

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Signed : _____ **Chair**

Date: