

QUALITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: 15th MARCH 2022

MINUTES

PRESENT	Anthony Smith (Chair), Amelia Sussman, Des Corlis (Staff Member), Angela Herbert, Simon Horne, Mark Isherwood, Nicole Morgan, Gemma Simmons-Blench, Asfa Sohail, Sinem Bozkurt (Student Member), Jenessa Chin (Student Member)
IN ATTENDANCE	Roy O'Shaughnessy (CEO), Kurt Hintz (Executive Principal), Gary Hunter (Deputy Executive Principal), David Dangana (Director of Quality and Compliance), Jas Sondhi (Vice Principal, WKC), Colleen Marshall (Vice Principal (CIC), Robin Hindley (Vice Principal, CONEL), Jackie Chapman (CCCT Managing Director), Graham Drummond (Director of Governance), Graham Cooper (Clerk)
APOLOGIES	Ashton Milton (Student Member)
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	None

The Chair welcomed everyone, including Angela Herbert and Nicole Morgan to their first meeting of the committee.

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27TH JANUARY 2022** **Action**
The minutes were agreed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chair.
2. **MATTERS ARISING**
The committee noted that all matters arising are covered in the agenda for this meeting.
3. **COLLEGE AND CCCT UPDATE REPORTS**
The Executive Principal explained that the focus of these updates is primarily progress in relation to sections of the Quality Improvement Plans that relate to areas for improvement identified in the last Ofsted Inspection report. Whilst High Needs was not identified as such, this is also included in order to provide the committee with an insight into progress in that area.
- 3.1. **WESTMINSTER KINGSWAY COLLEGE**
The Vice Principal WKC presented the review of progress in relation to the relevant areas of the WKC 2021/22 QIP. She explained that the main focus was on the Kings Cross Centre, being the centre predominantly identified for improvement in the last inspection. The Committee noted:
 - a) Attendance continues to be a challenge, particularly in English and maths, although some improvement is being seen as a result of the initiatives and interventions that have been made. The committee discussed the issues around poor attendance, nature of the measurement of attendance and the ways that patterns of non-attendance at course level are identified.
 - b) Teaching, Learning and Assessment: 85% of class visits have taken place this term. From these 14% (33) of teachers have an action plan, down from 24% (59) of teachers during the previous term. All staff with action plans are working with Teacher Improvement Managers, which is having a positive impact.
 - c) The majority of action plans are within the STEAM directorate 16-18 vocational area, with key themes being attendance and punctuality, the extent to which learners acquire new knowledge, and learner involvement and response. Also, it is evident from learning walks at the end of the last academic year that a key area needing to be addressed is inadequate planning, leading to poor classroom practices. This has therefore led to a focus on improving schemes of learning, and ensuring that checks are in place to ensure that in every lesson, students are developing the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours. Also, during this year's induction period, vocational skills assessments were undertaken by 80% of learners in order to provide an

improved understanding of individual learner starting points and so as to further adapt schemes of learning in order to address the skills and knowledge gaps that have been identified.

- d) Significant progress has been made in embedding the quality calendar (a key area of concern in the last inspection).
- e) To date, 94% of learners have reviews completed (compared to 50% during the year of the Ofsted inspection).
- f) 86% of assessment schedules are in place, areas of delay being within STEAM, notably Construction, Electrical Installation and Health & Social Care. In the case of Construction and Electrical Installation, this has been largely due to learners having to be registered with examining boards prior to the assessment schedules being put in place.
- g) Significant work has also been undertaken in relation to 'at risk' learners, with processes in place to identify and work with those learners through interventions focused on in-year improvements.

The committee asked about the mechanisms for gathering student feedback on the quality and impact of progress reviews and feedback on marked work, and noted that meetings taking place with Heads of School and Assistant Principals include a 'deep dive' analysis into data from Promonitor and are supplemented by focus group meetings with students from subject areas where there are concerns. There is also a process for ensuring that feedback from students with poor attendance is included. This is resulting in positive feedback from students, although there are some curriculum areas requiring further attention. The committee also encouraged the use of these focus groups to achieve an in-depth understanding of reasons for poor attendance where this is relevant, and to ensure that demonstrable action is taken in response to the feedback.

The committee was assured that there were no significant issues in relation to managers accessing classes in order to perform observations.

3.2. A-LEVEL

The Vice Principal CIC presented the review of progress in relation to the A-Level 2021/22 QIP and the committee noted, in relation to each of the key areas for improvement:

- a) Set consistent high expectations, particularly in relation to attendance, punctuality and the level of learners' motivation and engagement: A range of measures had been implemented, both at the Angel and at the Kings Cross Centre, including
 - Live data dashboards for attendance plus use of Promonitor
 - Communications to parents, including automated text messages and the parent portal.
 - The introduction of the new SchoolCloud platform for parents' evenings to increase the number of parents engaged, with a programme of three parents' evenings per annum. The committee asked further about this and emphasised the positive difference to learner achievement that can result from good and consistent levels of parent engagement. It is already evident from current evidence that improved parent engagement is resulting in improvements in attendance.
 - Implementation of minimum and aspirational grade setting.

This activity is underpinned by clear accountability of leaders and managers through KPIs.

- b) Assess learners' knowledge and understanding at the beginning of their programme: Summer bridging assignments are being used to assess students' starting points, and importantly, to identify gaps following the Teacher Assessed Grades and Centre Assessed Grades that have been used over the past two years.
- c) Timely reviews to regularly assess the progress of learners over time: The newly introduced standardised assessment calendar consists of 6 key assessments in Yr 12 and 6 in Yr 13, Progress reviews and reporting to students and reinforced through parents evening,
- d) Checking how well learners acquire new knowledge and skills, to help consolidate what they have learned: Use of ALPs to calculate and predict Value Added, use of Alps scores and Promonitor to target interventions, and weekly reporting on this by managers of each curriculum area.

The committee noted that although progress in closing the gap is evident, there continues to be inconsistency between students studying A-levels at the Angel and those at the Kings Cross Centre. Consistency, in relation to both the student experience and quality of education was a key issue highlighted in the last inspection. The Vice Principal advised that although there is confidence that the leaders and managers are more being consistently held to account, further progress is required. The committee also asked about the consequences for staff if targets are not met, and noted that significant changes in leadership and management have been implemented over the past couple of

years, particularly in relation to A-Level provision at CIC and now also at WKC. This has resulted in improved confidence in the team.

The Executive Principal reaffirmed the progress made towards achieving consistency and that he does not anticipate this being an issue raised in the next inspection. Attendance, however, remains an issue that is likely to be judged as requiring further improvement if it remains at current levels, notwithstanding the significant improvements. He also highlighted differences between the A-level provision at the Kings Cross Centre and the Angel, including student destinations, and the importance of having an approach and support that is appropriate to the destination expectations of each individual learner.

3.3. HIGH NEEDS

The Vice Principal CONEL presented the paper on High Needs provision, noting that the context differs from that of the other reports to this meeting in that High Needs Provision was graded as 2 at the last inspection and is currently deemed to include some areas of outstanding provision,

From the last inspection and deep-dive work that has been undertaken in the last year, the high turnover of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) has been identified as an issue, in relation to levels of expertise and consistency. An additional 15 LSAs have been recruited, but it is becoming more difficult to recruit people with the skills necessary to support learners with more specialist needs. The improved stability of the LSA workforce is, however, helping in terms of training and support for professional development, and is leading to greater sharing of expertise.

Progress is also being made in relation to learner access to work experience, including learners with high needs and Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). There had been concerns that workforce changes as the economy emerges from the pandemic would result in difficulty in finding work placements, but this has not happened and there is currently a strong demand from employers.

A number of measures, as reported, have also been implemented to improve exam access arrangements and student support in relation to exams.

The current trend of an increasing number of students with complex needs was noted, as is also evident in the school's sector. Whilst the Group's high-level provision includes the dedicated Alexandra Centre for students with profound learning difficulties, complex needs are also having to be met increasingly in specialist areas of the Group's mainstream provision. The Group will continue to assess how well it is meeting the requirements of high needs students in all these areas, and to identify ways in which it can adapt.

The committee also noted that not all high needs students have EHCPs and not all students with EHCPs have high needs, and sought clarification of the numbers. The Vice Principal answered in part, but undertook to provide more detail.

RH

The Executive Principal also explained the support provided by the Group to the increasing number of students with mental health issues and anxieties, including through the Group's counsellors and psychotherapists. The importance of broader staff training on mental health first aid was also highlighted.

3.4. APRENTICESHIPS

The CCCT Managing Director reported on progress in relation to the Apprenticeships 2021/22 Quality Improvement Plan and the committee noted:

- The main issue arising from the previous Ofsted was communication with employers, which had been discussed at various meetings of the committee and the Board over the past two years. Many of the actions to address this had been undertaken during the first year, leading to a significant improvement. These included staff training, spot audits and improvements to the review process. The progress is evidenced by the positive results from three surveys undertaken over the past eighteen months, with a further survey about to take place.
- The results from independent reviews posted by employers on the National Apprenticeship Service portal are illustrative of the distance travelled in improvement over the past two years. At the moment, the CCCG report on the service rates the Group as 'Good'.
- The Group is currently implementing a strategy on wider engagement with employers (not restricted to apprenticeships), focused on improved communication. This includes involvement of the sector-based groups that have been set up, with one of the activities being a series of sector focused dinners with employers.

- A further area of improvement identified in the last inspections report was the opportunity for all apprentices to receive careers advice. Progression for apprenticeships had also featured widely in recent Ofsted reports for other providers. There will therefore be a significant focus on enhancing this going forward, building upon the careers advice opportunities already provided.
- The committee asked about the current market for apprentices and the CCCT MD advised that some improvement is being seen, although this tends to be sector specific, Construction and Engineering, Culinary Arts, and, within Healthcare, Pharmacy. General Healthcare and Business Support Services are doing less well.

4. GROUP QUALITY UPDATE

The Group Quality Update report was received and considered. The following aspects were noted and discussed:

- Attendance and retention: Data for each college in the Group shows that levels are generally below prior year. Ordinarily, this would give rise to significant concern, but it is in line with the experience of the wider sector. It is difficult to make comparisons with the same time last year as colleges were then in lockdown delivering lessons online until the end of March 2021. The next comparable data will not be available until May. Interventions are nevertheless being undertaken to improve attendance, as explained earlier in the meeting in relation to WKC where the comparison to prior year shows most disparity.
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment: 515 (60% of teachers) classroom visits have been completed in term 2. 83 (9.7% of teachers) currently have action plans. There is no notable resistance from teachers to classroom visits. Generally, the key strengths identified include good learner involvement and responses in classes, good checks on learning, good learner feedback to improve the quality of their future work and good teacher style, communication and rapport with learners. The key areas for development are poor attendance and punctuality and the management of learning in classrooms.
- Performance Management: Numbers are very low. Of the 855 teachers in CCCG, 16 (2%) are being supported through the informal capability process and 2 (0.3%) are being supported through the formal capability process. The committee discussed the nature of development plans and the importance of these being supportive in nature, recognising the difficult experiences and challenges that teachers have faced during the past two years due to the impact of the pandemic. The committee also highlighted the value of staff surveys, to provide a real understanding of how staff are feeling. The Executive Principal confirmed that surveys have been undertaken, the results of which have been reported to the Board. Unsurprisingly, there is a general level of unhappiness, but this is reflective of the national picture of many teachers being unhappy in their profession, due to feeling overworked, stressed and underpaid. The recent survey shows that teachers' trust in their immediate line manager is very strong and that they feel supported. The Executive Principal agreed to provide further detail, including information on the range of actions that the Group has put in place to address these issues, to a future meeting. KH
- The committee asked about the demographic breakdown of those teachers with action plans and the Director of Quality and Compliance agreed to include this data in the report for the next meeting. DD
- A recent Learner straw poll revealed learner dissatisfaction with college facilities, including cleaning and the canteens. Whilst not affecting students' learning experience, it has resulted in many students responding to say that they would recommend their college course to a friend or family member, they would be less likely to recommend the college itself. Steps are being undertaken to address this as part of the college estate Rapid Improvement Plan and actions being taken are being communicated to students. There is also a task and finish group looking at replacement of the current catering contractors. The committee noted some of these as a potentially 'easy win', noting the difference that these can make to students feeling good and to the colleges' ability to attract learners.
- Quality Improvement: Teachers have engaged well with the 'One Thing' approach to quality improvement, working with Expert Practitioners to help teachers develop specific skills.
- Additional Support for Summer 2022 Examinations: All subject teachers on the General Qualifications (A Level and GCSE) have amended their scheme of work in line with the guidelines recent issued by the awarding organisations.
- Learner Engagement (You Said; We Did). The recent straw poll had been extended to ask questions about a much broader range of college services than teaching learning and

assessment, to incorporate tutorial support, target setting, College facilities (IT support, canteens, libraries), safety and wellbeing. This has given rise to a number of prompt interventions, task and finish groups and action plans, including those relating to college facilities as discussed earlier. Posters are being displayed on a 'You Said; We Did' theme in order to communicate to students the actions being taken in response to their feedback. A further straw poll will be undertaken at the beginning of Term 3 in addition to the usual student survey.

- The student members of the committee raised the issue of students needing to feel safe in college, particularly in the context of the levels of conflict and crime, including gang related crime and knife crime, in the local areas in which they live. Whilst noting that the external environment is outside the colleges' ability to control, the committee was particularly concerned that students should feel safe in college and noted the measures currently in place, including the management of access to college buildings, regular searches for knives etc. The Vice Principal WKC provided a verbal report on an incident that had taken place at the Kings Cross Centre on the previous day following a physical assault involving learners and other individuals that had taken place near to the college. There had also been a number of other concerning incidents over the past few months. The Executive Principal advised that a report on student safety and knife crime, and the actions being taken by the Group in response to these, is to be provided to the Board meeting on 30th March. The committee also highlighted the importance of staff feeling safe in their work environment.

5. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Committee received on 2020/21 performance from an EDI point of view, including learner performance (retention, pass and achievement rates) and learner destinations. The committee noted:

- The data shows that there is no protected characteristic for which the Group is more than 3% below the national average.
- Data was presented with breakdowns in relation to the following categories: gender and age, high needs, learners with learning difficulties, and ethnicity. The analysis was imperfect, however, to the extent that not all learners declare disabilities or their ethnic background, despite the Group's efforts to encourage this.
- With respect to learner performance: the analysis of retention, pass and achievement rates by gender and age showed negligible difference although with a fluctuating pattern year on year. Other data relating to learner performance was presented in the report by way of a number of graphs.
- With respect to learner destinations, data was also provided, broken down between 16-18 year old and 19+ learners.

The committee requested that a report to a future meeting also includes Value Added data broken down in a similar manner. The committee also advised that, whilst pleased to receive the data contained within the report, it would have been useful for the report to have included a summary of the executive team's insights, reflections and learnings from the data, highlighting the areas of concern and those areas where the data does not support the team's hypothesis. The committee therefore requested that the format of future reports is revised accordingly, and that the team reflects on the frequency of future reporting on this important matter to the committee

DD

6. FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 12th May 2022 5:30pm

Tuesday 28th June 2022 5:30pm