

Newham Sixth Form College

Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016

Present: Gail May (Chair), Meg Dabasia, Jay Nair, Joanne Dean, Rayon Walters, Allison Locke, Mohima Khan, Stephen Appiah, Eddie Playfair

In attendance: Ray Ferris (Vice Principal), Diana Pogson (Interim Director of Finance and Resources), Alfred Cardona (Head of Quality, Learning and Teaching), Nicole Schnappauf (PTM Maths), Paul Baglee (Clerk)

Apologies for absence were received from Jessie Robinson, Jonathan Birdwell, and Terry Paul. Retrospective apologies were received from Shazia Ali-Webber who has resigned from the governing body. Apologies were also received from Nick Christoforou and Tracy Oko.

1. Declarations of interest

There were no interests declared.

2. Presentation on actions to improve performance in GCSE English and Maths

The governors received a presentation from Nicole Schnappauf on the performance of GCSE Maths.

The governors were advised that the performance in GCSE Maths improved in 2016 and that student progression was positive at 0.4. They were provided with data showing that students were more likely to perform better at GCSE Maths if the other subjects they studied had a maths content. Class attendance and encouraging students to do maths work outside of lessons remained a significant challenge. These challenges were likely to increase in the future. The AoC had estimated that more students would need to study GCSE Maths post 16 as the GCSE curriculum and exam structure changed. The governors noted that internal focus group feedback had indicated students received more intensive classroom support for maths in secondary school, with limited expectations of work being undertaken individually out of class. The college approach was different, with fewer lessons than schools, and a greater reliance on students working outside of class.

The governors were also advised of the work being undertaken to improve student performance. This included a revised timetable with shorter more frequent lessons, more support to develop written communication skills and working with the NE London maths hub. The maths team had put forward a series of recommendations for a college-wide approach to supporting English and maths. In addition it was suggested that lunchtime English and maths clubs could be offered as students choosing to attend in their own time should be more motivated to study. The Principal advised the governors that the maths team's recommendations would be considered as part of the range of actions to improve attainment in these subjects.

Governors' questions (*responses in italics*)

- a) Does the maths team have good attendance? *There is little absence among the maths team. It's a good team that's well prepared.*
- b) Do students understand the significance of success GCSE English and Maths retakes for their future pathways? *Yes, this is discussed with students as part of the induction process.*

Action: governors agreed to receive the Vice Principal's presentation on the actions to improve GCSE English and Maths at the next meeting.

3. Approval of audited accounts 2015/16

The governors received and considered the report of the 2015/16 financial statements audit that was carried out by Buzzacott in September and October 2016.

The governors were advised that the auditors had offered an unqualified opinion on the accuracy of the accounts and the adequacy of the financial controls.

The governors noted that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee had received a detailed report on the audit and the accompanying management letter. The committee recommended the 2015/16 accounts for approval.

Decision: on the recommendation of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee the governors agreed to accept the financial statement audit and authorised the Chair to sign the accounts on behalf of the governing body.

4. Audit and Scrutiny Committee's annual report 2015/16

Decision: the governors received and accepted the Audit and Scrutiny Committee's annual report. They noted that the internal auditor's overall opinion was that: "based on the work carried out in the year, the college has adequate and effective risk management control and governance processes in respect of the areas examined during the year".

The governors noted that the committee now received regular reports on the implementation of the internal audit recommendations.

5. Campus masterplan update

The governors received and accepted an update report on the campus masterplan redevelopment.

The governors were advised that handover of the LRC had been delayed. This would now be completed by February half term and would be ready for students by 20 February 2017. The drama studio had now been handed over to the specialist contractor to be fitted out.

The governors were also advised that college had also applied to the Education Funding Agency for condition improvement funding to refurbish the link and the old LRC and to replace the 'C' block lift. The estimated value of these works was £2.8 million and the outcome of the bid would be known in April. Preliminary works would be carried out in advance so that the projects could be ready for an immediate start if the bid was successful.

6. Appointment of independent governors

Decision: on the recommendation of the Search Committee, the governors agreed to appoint Airey Grant as an independent governor from 7 December 2016. They also agreed that Julia Sheldon and Wendy Bower could be appointed as independent governors subject to a meeting with the Principal and satisfying him that they could offer the commitment required to be a governor.

7. Report from the student governors

The governors received and accepted the report of the student union.

The governors were advised that to raise the profile of the executive were looking to establish a more visible presence, preferably in the link. The governors were also advised that Prevent training had been held and that this was very insightful. Plans would be made to roll this training out for other students.

8. Staff pay award 2016/17

The governors received and considered a report on the national pay award for teachers. This was an award of 1% payable from January 2017.

Decision: the governors agreed to implement the national pay award for teachers of 1% from January 2017. The governors also agreed that the national pay award for support staff could be accepted when it was approved, providing it did not exceed 1%.

9. Learner voice – annual induction survey outcomes

The governors received and noted a report on the annual induction survey outcomes.

The governors were pleased to learn that there was a significant increase in the number of responses, with the response rate rising from 59% to 78%. There were also significant increases in the numbers of students who felt safe at college (97% up from 84%) and who would recommend the college to a friend (94% up from 77%).

The governors were reminded that new software provided for target groups to be surveyed. It was noted that a well-being and mental health survey would soon be carried out.

Governors' question (response in italics)

Do you know why 3% of students responding to the induction survey did not feel safe? *Students are asked to comment and the college will use this information to respond and assess the concerns raised.*

10. Review of student destinations

The governors received and accepted the annual report on student destinations.

The governors were advised that 89% of applicants progressed to Higher Education, exceeding the development plan target. A higher proportion of these students progressed to Russell Group universities than in 2015. Over 50% of students progressed to the top six destinations, with 19% remaining in London (21% in 2015). AS to A2 progression was down from 76% to 73% and internal progression from level 2 courses was up from 54% to 68%.

The governors congratulated the college on its performance for higher education progression and agreed to receive further data at the next meeting.

Action: further data on student destinations to be presented at a future meeting.

11. Course requiring improvement – monitoring report

The governors received and noted a monitoring report on the courses requiring improvement.

The governors were advised that 20 courses were in scope. English and maths remained a priority for monitoring, both with low performance at standard monitoring assessment (SMA) 1. Travel and Tourism and Sport was also a risk and the department was receiving additional support.

The governors noted that further data reports were being prepared to track student performance against their standard monitoring assessments, predicted grades and value added. This data should be available for the next meeting.

12. Quality improvement action plan

The governors received and noted an updated version of the quality improvement plan.

The governors were advised of the actions to improve the teaching of English and maths. Progress in this respect was rated as Amber – on track.

Governors' question (response in italics)

Is GCSE English and Maths the right qualification for students? *These are the government's current measures, but the existing expectations could be refined to make these courses more suitable for post 16 students. There's an indication that the FE Commissioner might review this.*

13. Monitoring visit action plan

The governors received and considered a report on the work of the task & finish group to address the findings of the Ofsted monitoring visit. The governors also received the latest version of the action plan and the minutes of the task & finish group meetings.

The governors were advised that the task & finish group monitored the implementation of the action plan. This was a dynamic document and a further version would be prepared for the next meeting of the group. The governors noted the ongoing work to raise student awareness of British values. The target for this work would be raised from 80%+ to 90%, and further sampling was due to take place in February 2017 and May 2017.

The governors were appreciative of the commitment of the task & finish group and thanked the staff for their work to address the monitoring visit findings.

Decision: the governors agreed to accept the report and receive the task & finish group minutes.

14. Whole college self-assessment review

The governors received and considered a report on the college self-assessment process and the provisional programme team grades.

It was noted that Gail May and Joanne Dean had attended a grading meeting on 22 November 2016 to provide an assurance about the rigour of the college's processes. The programme team grades were as follows:

Programme team	Grade 2015/16	Grade 2014/15
Health and child studies	1	3
Science	3	3
Maths and numeracy	3	3
Social Sciences	2	2
Engineering Technology	1	2
Information and Communication Technology	1	2
Leisure, Tourism and sport	4	2
Media	1	1
Visual and performing arts (combined)	2	2 & 2
Humanities and languages	3	2
English and communication	2	2
Foundation learning	2	2
Business (combined)	2	2

The governors noted that Leisure, Tourism and Sport was graded as 4. This was partly due to long term staff absences. A head of school was providing direct support.

Decision: the governors agreed to accept the grades and to receive reports on the progress with Leisure, Tourism and Sport at each meeting.

15. Governing body self-assessment

Decision: the governors agreed to defer this item to the next meeting and reconsider how governing body self-assessment was carried out in the future.

16. Link governor reports

The governors received and accepted link governor reports from Joanne Dean on the preliminary review of the 2016 exam results (29 October 2016), British values awareness (9 November 2016) and self-assessment validation (22 November 2016).

Decision: the governors deferred the other elements of the report to the next meeting.

17. Principal's report

The governors received and considered the report of the Principal.

a) Key performance indicators 2016/17

The governors were advised that the college had overachieved on student numbers by 23. This should equate to additional income in 2017/18, and would help offset some of the disadvantaged funding reductions.

b) Area review and partnership update

The governors were advised that the area review process for east London was complete and that the final report was now in draft form. The final report would be published in January and recommend that the college should remain as a stand-alone sixth form college. The college was judged to be financially viable and commended for its partnership work.

The governors noted the potential for further partnership work with the University of East London, Newham College and Havering Sixth Form College and the ongoing work with Newham secondary schools.

c) Summer term development day: June 2017

The governors identified the following potential themes for the development day:

- Governing body self-assessment
- Partnership working
- Success in English and maths
- Campus development
- College development plan
- Scrutiny process

d) Development plan update

Decision: the governors deferred this item to the next meeting.

e) Stakeholder meetings

The governors received and noted the minutes of the student council and staff council meetings.

f) Recent events

The governors noted the summary of recent events.

18. Scrutiny process

The governors deferred this item to the next meeting.

19. Regularity audit

Decision: on the recommendation of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee the governors accepted the regularity audit report.

20. Review of the performance of the internal auditors in 2015/16 against the indicators and the performance indicators for 2016/17

Decision: on the recommendation of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee the governors accepted the review of the performance of the internal auditors in 2015/16 and that the same performance indicators are set for 2016/17.

21. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 were **agreed** as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

22. Minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 November 2016

The governors received and noted the minutes of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 November 2016.

23. Minutes of the Search Committee held on 11 October 2016

The governors received and noted the minutes of the Search Committee held on 11 October 2016.

24. Meeting dates 2016/17

The governors agreed the following meeting dates:

Spring: Tuesday 7 February 2017 Tuesday 28 March 2017

Summer: Tuesday 16 May 2017 Tuesday 4 July 2017

All meetings to start at 6.30 pm

25. Review of senior postholder's pay and performance

The governors **agreed** that this item should be deferred to the next meeting as there were insufficient governors in attendance who are not staff or students to form a quorum.