



## **MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Virtual Meeting

Wednesday 4 November 2020, at 6.00 pm.

### **Present:**

Tim Oliver (Chair)

Paul Collyer

Dan Dean

Ruth Seabrook

Declan Mason

Dan Hards

Ken Kehoe (Clerk)

### **1. REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of business interests from Trustees.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence. Faith Owiny did not attend.

### **3. COVID 19 UPDATE**

The Principal updated the committee on the College's handling of the COVID 19 crisis. He made the following points:

- Following a review of current provision, the College had decided to create a third group of students that would be expected to attend full time in the second half of the term. This group comprised vulnerable young people (students with an EHCP, Looked After Children and young carers) and students on courses that required attendance at College to complete their courses. Dan Hards said that 62 vulnerable students had been offered places in the group. 55 were now attending full time;
- Additional protective measures had been put in place, including the procurement of 200 visors, and the rules on the wearing of face coverings had been tightened;
- 10 students and 1 member of canteen staff had tested positive for COVID 19. All the cases were from the community rather than within the College;
- There had been a productive INSET day on 16th October, focussing on the sharing of best practice in Blended Learning and looking at how practice could develop over the coming period;
- The government's position was not entirely satisfactory, particularly for 16-18-year olds, but the College's approach was in line with that advocated by the NEU; and
- Looking at next year's exams, there was a 3-week delay which would impact on summer term activity but there were few changes to the assessment requirements apart from Art and Design

which will now only be non-examined assessment. He did not expect further changes in the A level arrangements unless 6<sup>th</sup> Form Colleges were included in any lockdown.

In response to questioning from the Trustees, the Principal said that:

- He had received 5 messages of support from parents for the approach the College was taking and only 1 against;
- Even if students are working from home, staff can pick up students that are not attending lessons and spot potentially vulnerable students. Moreover, the staff knew the pre-existing vulnerable students from 6.1. All students were given advice on how to refer for help if not in college.
- Staff on the clinically vulnerable list could come into college, whilst the clinically extremely vulnerable would be advised to self-isolate.

The Committee thanked the Principal for his update.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting of 3 June 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

#### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

#### **6. ADMISSIONS ANALYSIS 2020**

The Principal introduced the Admissions Analysis for 2020. There was nothing particularly significant to draw attention to. There was an expected further small decline in enrolments from Richmond, as the borough's sixth form provision increased. There was a decline in the proportion of siblings taking up their offers; this would need to be monitored. But having said that, the College had 2010 students at enumeration day, up 60 students on last year, and during a period when the College had been unable to hold many of its on-site marketing events. Looking forward, there was no need for any significant changes in the Admissions Policy and the 2022 Policy would be similar to the 2021 Policy.

In discussion, the committee agreed that the current shortened form of analysis should continued to be provided, while the management information systems captured the data, and agreed that there was no need for significant revision to the Admissions Policy.

#### **7. REVIEW OF POLICIES**

##### **Policy for Addressing Bullying and Harassment (staff)**

The Principal introduced the policy, noting that the most substantive change was the inclusion of the sending of offensive Social Media messages as an example of bullying and harassment.

In response to a question from a Trustee, it was noted that if a student bullied or harassed a member of staff, this would be covered by the Student Code of Conduct.

The committee agreed the policy.

## Staff Code of Conduct

The key new additions to the Code of Conduct were:

The requirement for part-time staff, holding more than one job, to discuss with their line manager, at the earliest opportunity, potential conflicts between the requirements of those jobs; and

Paragraphs 7 and 8 on the use of social media.

In discussion, the Trustees noted that the requirement that staff “be mindful” of their actions on social media platforms was too imprecise. The Code should make clear that the College expected its staff not to post offensive material online. They also considered whether there should be specific reference to abiding by COVID regulations but it was judged that this was covered by the requirement for staff to abide by all health and safety regulations.

The committee agreed the Code of Conduct subject to amending the requirement to “be mindful” to staff being required to take responsibility for and consider the impact of any messages posted online, and in particular to make it clear that the posting of offensive material was not acceptable.

**Action: Policy to be amended in line with the Committee’s discussion.**

## Careers Education and Guidance Statement & Provider Access Policy

Dan Hards introduced the policy, noting that it was a new policy and a statement of intent. It was a well written policy that had been produced by Nicola Wilberforce, the Director of Progression Guidance. In discussion the following points were made:

- It would be helpful to have a Link Trustee to cover Careers Education and Guidance;
- It would be helpful to have Student Feedback on the service provided by the College. The Principal noted that a Trustee sits on the Careers SAR;
- Did we have the resources to deliver the aspirations in the policy? Yes, with the appointment of the Alumnae Officer.

The committee agreed the policy.

**Action: The Clerk to circulate a note to the Board of Trustees seeking a volunteer, preferably with local industry contacts, to take on the role of Link Trustee;**

**Action: Daniel Hards to liaise with the Director of Progression Guidance as to how we survey and measure impact of Progression Guidance activity.**

## 9. CONSTITUTION

### Parent Trustee

The Chair informed the committee that a new parent Trustee, Cindy Dawes, would be taking up her post the following week.

The committee discussed whether there was scope for the term of office of Parent Trustees to start earlier in the academic year but it was noted that it was only in September that the College knew which students would be attending and therefore which parents would be eligible to stand.

#### **10. PRESENTATIONS AT ACADEMY TRUST MEETINGS**

The Principal asked whether the committee wanted to resume the programme of presentations to the Board. The committee agreed that, provisionally, the programme should resume at the March meeting, should restrictions have been lifted. The choice of presentation would be at the Principal's discretion. The March meeting of this committee should consider the subject for the Trustees' Training Morning.

**Action: Clerks to add staff presentation to the March Board agenda, should restrictions have been lifted and the meeting take place in College.**

**The Principal to select and commission the presentation to the Board.**

#### **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

#### **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

*The meeting closed at 7.04pm.  
Attendance was 86%.*

Signed.....

Date.....

#### **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

<b>S&amp;P1-001</b>	Staff Code of Conduct to be amended in light of the Committee's discussion.
<b>S&amp;P1-002</b>	The Clerk to circulate a note to the Board of Trustees seeking a volunteer, preferably with local industry contacts, to take on the role of Link Trustee;
<b>S&amp;P1-003</b>	Daniel Hards to liaise with the Director of Progression Guidance as to how we survey and measure impact of Progression Guidance activity.
<b>S&amp;P 1 -004</b>	Clerks to add staff presentation to the March Board agenda, should restrictions have been lifted and the meeting take place in College.
<b>S&amp;P 1-005</b>	The Principal to select and commission the presentation to the March Board meeting.

**SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]**

<b>C/S</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Topic</b>
C	7	The Trustees strengthened the requirements in the Staff Code of Conduct, regarding the posting of material, particularly offensive material, online.