

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LEICESTER COLLEGE CORPORATION:

## MEETING OF THE CURRICULUM STRATEGY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 APRIL 2023 Via TEAMS



Present:	Anne Frost (Chair) Zoe Allman Lisa Armitage Shaun Curtis Sam Emery	Danielle Gillett Verity Hancock Maureen Magutu Jai Sharda
In Attendance:	Louise Hazel Kully Sandhu Debi Donnarumma  Claire Willis Jody Kerrod Neil Challinor Rachel Hall Rominder Sandhu Lee Barrett	Director of Governance and Policy Vice Principal Adult and HE Vice Principal Study Programmes and Apprenticeships Director of Quality Improvement (items 9-11) Quality Development Manager (item 7) Quality Development Manager (item 8) Director of Apprenticeships (item 4) Director of EMES (item 5) Head of Personal Development (items 1-6)

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 1.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2.1 There were no apologies for absence.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 3.1 **The minutes of the meeting on 8 February 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and approved.**

- 3.2 As a matter arising, the VP Adult and HE reported on developments with AAT. Retention had improved for both of the two groups and there had been good pass rates for exams so far. The synoptic exams had been brought forward to avoid clashes with GCSEs and provide time for resits if needed. Tuition funds had been used to provide additional support and a meeting had taken place with the awarding body. A decision would be made following the synoptic exams as to whether to continue to offer the provision. It was reported that another local provider had ceased to offer AAT.

## **4 CURRICULUM AREA FOCUS: APCO**

- 4.1 The Director of Apprenticeships and Commercial (APCO) gave a presentation on the work of the area. The following points were highlighted.
- 4.1.1 The structure of the team was outlined.
  - 4.1.2 The team had worked hard on the curriculum intent to make sure that the offer met local need and addressed skills gaps. It now covered six out of the 10 local skills gaps. The College was the largest single provider with 8% of market share.
  - 4.1.3 22 Apprenticeship standards were offered, most at Level 3 with some higher-level apprenticeships in Operations Manager and Construction Manager.
  - 4.1.4 Work had taken place with local employers to develop the curriculum to better meet local need. Examples of new provision included cabinet making and machinist technician; courses that had been removed included childcare and digital marketing.
  - 4.1.5 All programmes were now sequenced and employers and apprentices had copies of the relevant workplans.
  - 4.1.6 Quality developments were highlighted including personalised CPD for staff, the use of Cognassist to identify additional support needs for neurodiverse students and mental health first aid training for staff to support construction apprentices in particular.
  - 4.1.7 Achievement rates were showing improvements but there was still a legacy impact of COVID because of the duration of some programmes.
  - 4.1.8 Challenges included being able to accommodate demand, staff recruitment, EPA backlog following the pandemic and retention on some of the longer duration courses.
- 4.2 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**
- 4.2.1 **The range of the offer, the work with employers and the introduction of new courses in response to specific feedback epitomised what the College should be doing.**
  - 4.2.2 **How was the new next steps offer 'new' and why was that not in place previously?** This had previously been covered through the review process with Skills Coaches but feedback from apprentices was that this was not what they wanted and so the new programme had been put in place.
  - 4.2.3 **Was there any feedback on how this was working?** Not yet but feedback would be sought later in the year.
  - 4.2.4 **The lack of demand for digital marketing was interesting and not what was suggested by the LSIP. This would be fed back.**
- 4.3 **Governors thanked the Director for her presentation and noted the information.**

## **5 CURRICULUM AREA FOCUS: EMES**

- 5.1 The Director of Employability and ESOL (EMES) gave a presentation on the work of the area. The following points were highlighted.

- 5.1.1 The offer was delivered through five programme areas which reflected their geographical location. The intention was to offer provision in venues that were accessible and close to where students lived.
- 5.1.2 There were six strands: 16-18 ESOL, 19+ ESOL, employability (sector work-based academy programmes (SWAPs)), full-cost language competency tests, in-class ESOL support and projects including Multiply, Moneywise and the Leicester GREAT project.
- 5.1.3 There were around 340 ESOL courses with 5,000 adult enrolments and 300 full-time EPYP students annually.
- 5.1.4 The curriculum intent was described. The offer included accredited and non-accredited courses and aimed to prepare students to progress to other full-time or vocational programmes. SWAPs had been supplemented to make them more holistic programmes and include personal development elements.
- 5.1.5 Achievement showed a three-year positive trend.
- 5.1.6 Priorities for 2023/24 were highlighted and included exploring new opportunities to mitigate the reduction in the funding rates for some ESOL qualifications, increasing ESOL achievement rates by at least 0.5 %, improving attendance rates for male 16-18 students, notably the 175 unaccompanied young asylum seekers to 89%, and securing wider access to enrichment opportunities for all students.

## 5.2 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

- 5.2.1 **What plans were in place to improve male students' attendance?** Several strategies were in place. For the unaccompanied asylum seekers, there were three meetings a year involving the student and their support agencies. The importance of good attendance was reinforced through these although it was acknowledged that students often had multiple appointments to attend concerning their asylum application. Work was also underway with the student services team on an acculturation programme which would also encourage students to take ownership of their attendance.
- 5.2.2 **What proportion of teachers were full-time; research showed a correlation between poor quality and high numbers of part-time or agency staff.** There were 15 full-time staff, 17 FTE part-time lecturers and 34 part-time staff. Some had been with the College for many years and worked over 20 hours. The part-time nature of their contracts suited their personal circumstances.
- 5.2.3 **Was there any difference in the quality of teaching by full-time and part-time staff?** There was not; part-time staff had the same opportunities to CPD and training as full-time staff.
- 5.2.4 **What was attendance like and how was it ensured that students could make up lost learning?** Attendance was around 82%; the aim was for 89%. There were regular reviews and constant reinforcement of the correlation between attendance and achievement.
- 5.2.5 **It was good to see so much PD incorporated in ESOL programmes; that was a strength.**

## 5.3 **Governors thanked the Director for her presentation and noted the information.**

## **6 UPDATE ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

6.1 The Head of Personal Development presented an update report on the personal development (PD) programme. The following points were highlighted:

- 6.1.1 Personal development covered everything outside the academic or vocational programme, essentially the soft skills, work experience, employability, EDI, character and confidence building etc.
- 6.1.2 The College was on a journey in its approach to rolling out a more standardised approach to personal development.
- 6.1.3 A diagnostic approach had been taken, asking students at the beginning of the programme what they knew and could do. This helped the College formulate areas for action and identify where to focus support teams. Cross-College themes had been around work readiness and next steps and progression, students' experience of both of which had been adversely affected by the pandemic. The deep dives were also highlighting additional themes.
- 6.1.4 A PD groups involving students was helping inform future developments. The feedback would be acted on and changes made for next year.
- 6.1.5 A social action project-based approach was also being developed noting the qualifications reform and expectations that PD below Level 2 should be focused on to enable better transition to Level 2.

6.2 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

- 6.2.1 **It had been good to hear the feedback through the student PD group. It showed that it was working well in some areas but not so much in others.** Agreed.
- 6.2.2 **In terms of areas for improvement, what was needed around careers and IAG?** There was work to do to help students think about their end point at the start of their journey and the pathway they needed to get to it.
- 6.2.3 **Ofsted would expect EPYP students in particular to have clear plans and know how to get there. How well PD promoted character, confidence, resilience and citizenship was also important.** Noted. The project-based learning and skills development should support this. It would help connect students to charities and other groups.
- 6.2.4 **The PD offer needed to be available in a proportionate way for apprentices and part-time adults; they should be signposted to suitable activities.** Noted. The PD approach was cross-College and there was a bespoke on-line portal for adults, HE and apprenticeships.

6.3 **Governors noted the information.**

## **7 DESTINATION AND PROGRESSION REPORT 2021/22**

7.1 The Quality Development Manager presented a report on Destinations and Progression for 2021/22. The following points were highlighted:

- 7.1.1 In the 2021/22 academic year, 9,592 students were recorded as completed or completed and achieved. Of these, 2,569 (27%) external destinations were captured and 2,590 (27%) internally progressed, providing a 54% sample.
- 7.1.2 Of the students surveyed, 77% had a positive destination, a decrease of 5% on the previous year.
- 7.1.3 Of the students with a positive destination, 64% went into employment and 13% went into education.
- 7.1.4 The numbers that were NEET were 6% higher than the previous year at 22%.
- 7.1.5 Overall, 53% of students reported a link between their course and their sector of employment.
- 7.1.6 Further investigation was needed into the areas and groups of students where there had been a significant drop in positive destinations and/or internal progression.
- 7.1.7 Suggested areas for improvement included improving careers and IAG at all stages of the student journey, more training for staff on IAG, ensuring students had early tutorials and making sure that students were on the right course for them and their desired destination.

## 7.2 **Governors asked a number of questions including:**

- 7.2.1 **It was not clear for what proportion of students who had left the College knew the destinations of. Was the proportion good or a cause for concern?** Five thousand out of a possible 10,000 destinations had been captured.
- 7.2.2 **22% NEET seemed very high, was the College comfortable with that? How did it compare to other colleges?** It was not possible to compare nationally. It might be skewed by the high numbers of ESOL students who might be economically inactive and not seeking work or further study. They might have had a positive outcome if not a positive destination.
- 7.2.3 **If only 21% had a positive destination, then almost 80% did not, that did not seem right.** 77% had a positive destination. The College had not been able to capture data for all of the 10,000 students.
- 7.2.4 **Was it possible to filter by provision type?** This could be done.
- 7.2.5 **It might be that students did not want to report their destinations, it felt a bit invasive and the survey was long.** Noted. It would be helpful to know what might encourage students to respond.
- 7.2.6 **Perhaps students could be asked what skills they had learned and what they had found most helpful.** These questions had been added for this year.
- 7.2.7 **Did the College cross-reference with any other institutions?** Meetings had taken place with four other colleges and a good discussion had taken place before the survey was generated this year. Some asked students to come and collect their certificates and complete destinations information at that point although this was not felt to be a suitable option for the College.

## 7.3 **Governors noted the report on Internal Progression and requested a further report with clearer explanation at the next meeting.**

## **8     16-18 PERFORMANCE TABLES**

- 8.1 The Quality Development Manager presented a report on 16-18 performance tables. The following points were highlighted:
- 8.1.1 These were the first set of performance tables that had been published since the pandemic although they did not include all measures.
  - 8.1.2 The data showed that students at Leicester College achieved less well than in other schools and colleges in applied general qualifications and technical level 3 qualifications. Disadvantaged students achieved slightly less well than those that were not disadvantaged.
  - 8.1.3 Level 2 technical students, including disadvantaged students, achieved better at Leicester College than in other colleges.
  - 8.1.4 70% of in scope students progressed to either education or employment against the national average of 79%.
  - 8.1.5 The College had lower starting points than nationally with only 42% of students having achieved both maths and English compared against other GFE institutions (57%). Target grades would be lower for its cohort than nationally.
  - 8.1.6 Suggested actions were highlighted.
- 8.2 In response to a **question** as to whether it was possible to see evidence of lower starting points, it was explained that this was not currently available in the performance tables but pre-COVID data had suggested this was the case.
- 8.3 **Governors noted the information.**

## **9     ACHIEVEMENT RATES 2021/22: COMPARISON WITH NATIONAL RATES**

- 9.1 The Director of Quality Improvement presented a report on achievement rates for 2021/22 compared to national rates. The following points were highlighted.
- 9.1.1 The Education and Training overall achievement rates showed a three-year declining trend but was 1.8% above the NAR.
  - 9.1.2 16-18-year-old overall achievement rates showed a three-year declining trend. 2021/22 achievement was 4.5% below the NAR. Level 3 achievement rate was 3.4% above the NAR, Entry/level 1 and level 2 were both below.
  - 9.1.3 The College's 16-18-year-old achievement rates were above the NAR for Awards and Diplomas.
  - 9.1.4 There were no NARs published for GCSE 9-4 pass rates 2021/22. GCSE English and maths 9-1 achievement rates were 7.2% above the last NAR.
  - 9.1.5 Functional Skills English and maths achievement rates were 1.8% above the NAR and showed an 8.4% increase on 2020/21.
  - 9.1.6 Adult overall achievement had declined by 2.0% on 2020/21 but was 2.2% above the NAR. Level 3 achievement was 3.1% and Entry/level 1 3.6% above the NAR. Level 2 was 4.4% below the NAR.
  - 9.1.7 Adult achievement rate was above the NAR in three of the five main qualification types.
  - 9.1.8 Achievement for Apprenticeship Standards and Frameworks 0.4% above the NAR. Level 2 was 6.2% above, level 3 and 4/5 were both

below by 2.0% and 4.8% respectively.

- 9.1.9 The College had looked at where the main issues were. Some of these would be resolved by changes that had already been made although there was still work needed particularly around curriculum intent, IAG, tracking and monitoring and in year intervention. 16-18 remained an area for concern.
- 9.1.10 Most of the issues identified by comparison with the national rates had already been included in the QIP.
- 9.2 The Vice Principals reported on progress in monitoring low performing areas. Hair and Beauty were showing improved retention and predicted grades looked to be improving. Launchpad had changed its offer to reduce the number of qualifications and make it more manageable for students. A decision had been made to discontinue Uniform Public Services on quality and destination grounds, this would be taught out.
- 9.3 In response to a **question** as to whether this committee should be looking in more detail at the problem areas, it was confirmed that some of these had been reported to the last meeting but there were some new areas. A report would come back to the next meeting.
- 9.4 **Governors noted the report on achievement rates.**

*Jai Sharda left the meeting*

## **10 QIP UPDATE**

- 10.1 The Director of Quality Improvement gave an update on progress with the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The following points were highlighted.
- 10.1.1 KPIs were monitored throughout the academic year in termly VP compliance meetings, QA meetings and at CSQI. The evidence of impact for several actions would not be in place until the end of the academic year.
- 10.1.2 New delivery models for EPYP in English and maths had been introduced.
- 10.1.3 The Deep Dives were showing consistently high levels of good behaviour and attitudes; these had also been commented on in the Ofsted T level review.
- 10.1.4 Work to improve holistic sequencing was underway; new schemes of work and curriculum planning for next year would be picking this up.

### **10.2 Governors noted the progress with the QIP.**

## **11 KPI MONITORING**

- 11.1 The Director of Quality Improvement gave an update on KPIs. The following points were highlighted.
- 11.1.1 Attendance and retention had been discussed throughout the meeting. Attendance particularly continued to be monitored closely.
- 11.1.2 Progress data showed -0.03 against the target position. The new

target setting methodology was felt to be working well. 9.1% of students were currently predicted to fail but the majority were on track to pass and achieve their target grade.

11.2 In response to a **question** it was confirmed that there was one area which had a higher proportion of predicted fails but in most areas, the numbers were small.

11.3 **Governors received and noted the update.**

## **12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

12.1 There was no other business.

## **13 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- 14 June 2023