



SOUTHGATE COLLEGE GOVERNING CORPORATION

Standards and Performance Committee

Minutes of the meeting of 8th July 2010, commencing at 4.00 p.m.

Attendance

Members

Chris Gill	(Chairman)
Reshma Bell	(Staff Governor)
David Byrne	(Principal)
Ingrid Mustoe	(Staff Governor)

In attendance

Ann Zinkin	(Board Chairman, from item 7)
David Chaplin	Chaplin Frobisher Welling, Clerks to the Corporation

1. Minutes of the Meeting of 22nd March 2010

Received: minutes of the meeting of 22nd March 2010

The minutes of the meeting of 22nd March 2010 were amended to record the attendance of Kit Davies, and then agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2. Matters arising

The Chairman explained that as he was new to the Committee he would be grateful if one or two items in the minutes could be further explained to him.

2.1 Attendance incentives (para 7.2)

Both David Byrne and Ingrid Mustoe reported on the strategies that had been discussed post inspection and partially implemented. The Chairman stated that he thought that, in general, incentives were a better approach than punishments and asked management to look at radical schemes to improve attendance in addition to ensuring that all classes are interesting and stretching. (see also item 6 below).

2.2 Protocol National

David Byrne explained the role of Protocol National – who were the largest national agency providing part-time teachers – “agency staff” – in enabling the College to manage short notice or difficult to fill vacancies. (see also item 7 below).

2.3 Learner Voice (para 12)

The Chairman asked if there had been any progress in developing the Learner Voice. David Byrne reported that the Student Council had responded eagerly to the challenge.

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Helped by College staff and officers from the National Union of Students (NUS) they had put proposals to the Leadership Team for a rewriting of the Student Council constitution (which would have to be brought to the Governing Body for approval) that included a sabbatical Student Council President post and a clearly defined role for “Course Champions”.

2.4 “A Day in the life of a student” (para13)

The Chairman asked if this initiative had been implemented.

David Byrne reported that a number of exercises had been carried out, involving a film crew meeting a group (not previously warned) on their entry to the College, and then following them throughout the day. Feedback had been very interesting and was being evaluated. There were clearly problems with the attitude of some catering and security staff, and a problem of “long gaps” in the timetable between classes had also been identified.

Ingrid Mustoe said that this latter problem caused problems for the Sport staff, as, if the common-room was closed, there were very few break-out areas or enrichment activities. The Clerk suggested that if the Learner Voice developed as hoped it might be possible for the College to give the Student Council greater the responsibility for developing enrichment activities.

Ingrid also repeated her suggestion that a similar exercise to track “a day in the life of a teacher” might be informative.

2.5 Strategy for Learner Improvement (para 2.2) and Ofsted Inspection Action Plan (para 2.3)

David Byrne reported that both of these would be covered in the overall development plan.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Claude Pehrson

4. Declaration of Governor Interest

None received.

5. Notification of any items of urgent business

There were none.

6. Student Attendance and Retention Report

(Received: Statistics on Student Attendance and Retention to June 30th 2010)

David Byrne spoke to these reports.

6.1 Retention

Overall in year retention at 87% was above target (85%), with little variation between <16, 16-18 and 19+ statistics.

However, when analysed by Division some weak areas were revealed. Science and Maths (84%), ESOL & EFL and Young College (both 83%) were marginally below target, but English/Languages/Humanities were well below target at 76%. These weaknesses were also reflected in some of the other performance indicators, and was one factor being taken into account in the re-structuring of the Curriculum offer.

6.2 Attendance

This was the first year of the use of full electronic registers, and the overall figure of 76 %

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(79% when late attendees were included) was understated because of teething troubles in finding ways of recording the legitimate activities of learners on placements etc instead of being in normal classes. However, the statistics reported in previous years were wildly overstated, as Governors had noted. When analysing the comparative year on year statistics, the current performance was better than 2008/09.

There were no areas markedly below average.

Ingrid Mustoe said that she was aggrieved that in many cases her students, legitimately away from class because of participation on external course related activities, were classified as absent. Management accepted this point and agreed that the summer review of the first full year of operation would see procedural improvements and clarification of marks etc.

7. Update on Lesson Observations

Received: Lesson Observation Report September 2009 to June 28th 2010

185 observations had been scheduled, and all had taken place and been reported.

Overall 70% of observations had been assessed as Good or Outstanding, and for established (i.e. non agency) staff the figure was 77%.

However there had still been 7 lessons assessed as inadequate, all delivered by agency staff and this was completely unacceptable; the % of agency staff lessons assessed as Outstanding or Good was only 49%.

The Committee queried why in the table, five agency staff had been awarded “outstanding” grades, whilst the narrative only identified four. The Principal responded that this was a typographical error, for which he apologised.

The Leadership Team were determined to improve the performance of part-time staff, either by forcing Protocol National to provide pre-start evidence of teachers’ competence, or by making alternative provision.

The Principal reported that for all staff it was important to get the message across that satisfactory was not adequate to meet the standards which Southgate College intended to be achieved. The Principal reported that from the new academic year, revised intervention points for capability procedures would be invoked.

The Chairman asked if any assessment was made, either of the impact of additional training/development provision, or of the correlation of Outstanding/Good lesson observations with exam performance.

8. Report on Complaints Monitoring 2009/2010

Received: Report of complaints analysed by centre

David Byrne felt that the complaints process was effective in providing remedies, and also in picking up endemic problems, such as staff shortages leading to class cancellations.

The Clerk remarked that the large number of complaints relating to poor IT access noted in the previous two years was no longer a feature.

9. Ofsted Inspection

Received: the report of the Ofsted Inspection of Teacher Education – March 2010

David Byrne emphasised that the critical nature of the report in essence stemmed from the difference in interpreting the way the Middlesex University/College course had been set up

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and the unwillingness of some of the OFSTED team to accept an approach whereby practising teachers in non-traditional areas, often from clearly non-academic backgrounds were encouraged to undertake training and proceed to higher level qualifications only if and when they were ready. In their view, this had the effect of allowing too many “drop off” points and allowed some teachers to remain on programme when they were going to clearly struggle to make the necessary teaching standard.

The technical assessment of success rates was also skewed by the insistence of Middlesex University (MU) that the programme should be regarded as a single entity, rather than two discrete elements. As a result, OfSTED reasonably assumed that the number of successful outcomes compared with the number of “starts” on the two year programme was not good enough.

However, the situation was clearly unsatisfactory, and the College had decided to withdraw from the MU partnership, with existing students being taken through to completion but with no year one intake in 2010.

The replacement programme, which it was hoped to commence in September 2011, was being developed in association with the London University Institute of Education.

10. 2008/9 GCE A and AS level exam Results 2008/9

Received: an analysis of average A level (and equivalent) point scores for Enfield and Barnet schools and colleges; an analysis of Value Added performance for AS level subjects at Southgate College, all statistics relating to 2008/9

10.1 Average point scores

The average score per exam entry at Southgate College in 2009 had been 199.6 (up from 192.5 in 2008, but slightly below the value of 201.2 recorded in 2006. This compared with values of 194.3 at Barnet College, and an LSC average (which includes 6th Form Colleges) of 210.3. The national LEA (schools) average was 210.2.

10.2 Value added scores

The Chairman found the report difficult for a lay person to understand fully what the implications of the report were for the College. He also asked the College whether they felt the report gave value for money. The Clerk suggested that for colleges, which did not necessarily recruit the whole range of ability levels, value added was generally regarded as a most important performance measure.

The report showed that Southgate College performance was significantly better (top 20%) than most institutions in Accounting, Art(textiles), Biology, Film Studies, Mathematics, Media Studies, Music and Sociology, but significantly worse (bottom 20%) in Drama, Physical Education, Physics and Spanish.

Again, this data was taken into account in the reshaping of the curriculum.

11. College Charter

(Received: the current College Charter)

The Clerk reminded Members that this had been very thoroughly reviewed in 2009.

It was agreed to recommend that no further changes be made.

12. Committee Terms of Reference

Received: the current Terms of Reference

The Chairman suggested that the Committee could be more appropriately re-named the Performance and Achievement Committee, as this more clearly indicated that the Committee was concerned to see performance and achievement, and indeed the whole quality of the learner experience, shaped to the requirements of the Southgate College learner, rather than by reference to standards set externally.

It was agreed to recommend to the Corporation Board that the Committee be re-named the Performance and Achievement Committee

13. Any other urgent business

There was none

14. Date of next meeting

The next scheduled meeting was 4th November 2010 1600 hours

The meeting finished at 5.45 p.m

Signed

Dated