

**NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

Minutes of the **Curriculum and Standards Committee** meeting held via Teams on:  
**TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2023 AT 5.00PM**

**PRESENT**            Natalie Cullen (Chaired)            Principal  
                         Helen Hayden                            Father Tim Swinglehurst  
                         Ronan McKernan                        Sadie Walker

**IN ATTENDANCE:**    Susan Francis – Governance Professional  
                                 Sustainability Champion – Item 5 only  
                                 Assistant Principal Quality Improvement  
                                 Assistant Principal Student Experience  
                                 Assistant Principal Quality & Curriculum  
                                 Christine Bosch– new Foundation Governor

*In the absence of the Committee Chair, Natalie Cullen offered to chair the meeting.*  
The meeting was opened with a prayer.

- |   | <b>ACTION</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <b>1            APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS</b>  |               |
| 1.01       Apologies were received and accepted from Sarah Dumont and David Wright. Following the meeting, apologies were received from Father Michael Hall.  |               |
| <b>2            DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>  |               |
| 2.01       There were no declarations of interest.  |               |
| <b>3            MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</b>   |               |
| 3.01       The minutes from the meeting on 12 December 2022 were agreed as a true record. The Chair was authorised to sign them.  |               |
| <b>4            REVIEW ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING</b>  |               |
| 4.01       There were no matters arising or actions from the previous meeting.  |               |
| <b>5            SUSTAINABILITY PRESENTATION</b> from Sustainability Champion.   |               |
| 5.01       Governors were taken through a PowerPoint presentation on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The following points were highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The United Nations definition of sustainability was the reconciliation of environmental, social and economic demands.</li><li>• The Environmental Alliance of Universities and Colleges (EAUC) had created an FE climate roadmap to include the following areas - Leadership and Governance, Teaching/Learning and Research, Estates and Operations, Partnerships and Engagement and Data Collection.</li><li>• All staff had received training on the SDGs and carbon awareness, Y12 student representatives had trained and cascaded information to their tutor groups.</li><li>• College had organised numerous sustainability events.</li><li>• Next steps would be to use the Education and Training Foundation (EFT) curriculum mapping tool.</li></ul> |               |

5.02 In terms of the Estates and Operations, the following was noted:

- Each college building had Grade A energy efficiency
- Intelligent heating systems had been installed
- Motion sensitive lighting enabled lights to automatically switch off
- All computers now switched off at 7pm to allow for upgrades
- There was a rolling programme of changing lights to LEDs
- The new build: Use of sustainable materials, solar panels, air-source heat pumps, an attenuation tank that will direct water overflow into surface sewer for reuse and gender neutral toilets.
- Reduced energy consumption by more efficient use of thermostats and timers.

5.03 Next steps would be:

- To measure the College's carbon footprint and set targets to move towards net zero
- Staff and students to complete Carbon Literacy Accreditation.
- To appoint the next EcoTeam, to engage with both Y12 and Y13 student tutor reps to encourage even more student involvement in improving signage around College
- Develop links with external agencies – e.g.: Careers and Green skills

The Committee all agreed it was a very positive initiative and thanked Sustainability Champion and all those involved for their time and commitment.

Sustainability Champion *left the meeting at 5.30pm.*

## 6 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

6.01 *This document had been shared with governors ahead of the meeting.*

The following headlines were brought to the attention of the governors:

### College Qualification Achievement Rates (QAR) Data for February 2023

College currently stood at slightly higher than the National benchmarks. The College retention for 22/2023 was forecast to be 91.5% against a 2018/19 benchmark of 88%. College retention was currently running at 98%.

6.02 Information about the Department for Education (DfE) performance tables was given in light of the impact of Covid on progress measures and the way grades were awarded during the pandemic That 16-18 progress measures would return from 2023/24.

Drawing conclusions based on comparisons with performance data from earlier years and based on direct comparisons with other schools' or colleges' performance data was strongly discouraged. That caution be advised when comparing a school or college's performance with national or local authority averages.

Information can be accessed: <https://www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk/school/130548/notre-dame-catholic-sixth-form-college>

6.03 January Results for GCSE English and GCSE Maths

The resit results were very pleasing, that the College was well above the National.

- Nationally English re-sits grade 4-9 was 38% - College 62.7%
- Nationally Maths re-sits grade 4-9 was 24.9% - College 35.6%

6.04 Summer 2023 Exam Series

It was shared that this year would see a return to pre-pandemic grading. It was recognised that students taking exams in 2023 had experienced disruption due to the pandemic, therefore Ofqual would put in some grading protection.

That this would be the first year that this cohort had sat external exams since they were in Year 6, and College staff were mindful of this.

Information about grading was regularly communicated to students and their parents/carers.

**Q** – Would the grade depression impact on University places?

**A** – It shouldn't have any real effect, there may be fewer top grades than previously.

6.05 In terms of applications for September 2023, there had been an increase of 405. As 3390 had been received compared to 2985 for the same period in 2022.

The completion of the new build would help to alleviate the pressure on space.

6.06 Information on the Curriculum offer update for September 2023 was explained by the Principal. This included the DfE decision on the de-funding of vocational and applied technical qualifications to be fully implemented from September 2024 and how this would impact the College.

An overview of new vocational courses to be introduced by College in September 2023 was shared. In addition, further details on the T Levels Curriculum to be offered in College from September 2024 were referenced.

**Q** – Given the narrowing of the curriculum offer due to the de-funding of the vocational and applied technical qualifications, would it be worth writing to the DfE to express our concerns?

**A** – We have written on several occasions and also to the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) but will make further contact. The SFCA has also written on behalf of all sixth form providers.

**7 REPORTS and UPDATES**

These reports had all been received as part of the meeting bundle. Members of the Senior Leadership Team went through each report and drew the attention of the Committee to the following points:

7.01 Catholic Life Update Report

- Progress in the key areas of Catholic Life and Mission, Collective Worship and Religious Education were reported.

- A Stella Maris Awards evening was planned for the 27 April, at which the Bishop would attend, and all Governors had also been invited.
- To extend and promote this award to other Catholic Universities, Leeds Trinity University fully committed to the award. Thanks for this were given to a recently appointed Foundation governor who had also written an article for *The Tablet* – the main national Catholic weekly magazine about the Stella Maris Award.
- To develop international links and be of service to the wider Church community, the College had twinned with school in Notre Dame Enugu Nigeria.
- College was in scope for a Catholic Inspection and to this end a working group of Governors and College staff had been convened, they met regularly to review and update the CSI Evaluation Document.

7.02 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Self-Assessment update.

- Key objectives and reviewed dates were shared.
- All SLT were safer recruitment trained.
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) students were well integrated into College life and not shown to be disadvantaged.

7.03 Achievement Support – Self Assessment Report

Year on year increases in attendance, demonstrate the love of learning from students.

2021-22	94.4
2020-21	93.8
2019-20	91.5
2018-19	90.5

7.04 Pastoral student support to include mental health/safeguarding

7.05 Destinations report update

7.06 SPOCs (Student Perception of Course) feedback Student Perception of Course to include student experience SPOCs.

**8 LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS (for information**

8.01 The role of Link Governors is under review by the Search and Governance committee. Further details to follow.

- Feedback from any Link governor meetings that have taken place. (Catholic Life from Fr Tim is in the meeting bundle).  
Please send your reports to [s.francis@notredamecoll.ac.uk](mailto:s.francis@notredamecoll.ac.uk)

9	<b>PROGRESS AGAINST COLLEGE SAR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QUIP)</b> (for information)	
9.01	<b>Resolved: That the Link Governors for 2022/2023 would be as follows:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding – Jo McPartlan</li> <li>• Quality of Education/Assessment/Teaching and Learning – Fr Michael Hall</li> <li>• Vocational overview – Sadie Walker</li> <li>• Enrolment/Attitude to Learning - Natalie Cullen</li> <li>• Catholic Life – Father Tim Swinglehurst</li> </ul>	
10	<b>PROGRESS AGAINST CATHOLIC LIFE INSPECTION</b> (for information)	
11	<b>SKILLS STATEMENT OF INTENT</b> (for information)	
12	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b> (for information) Have governors identified any new risks or modifications to existing risks on the register?	
13	<b>POLICY REVIEW</b> <i>All policies were included in the meeting bundle on Teams and via email. Governors had been asked to read through all policies ahead of the meeting. All policies/procedures have been reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access Arrangements</li> <li>• Complaints Procedure (due April 2023)</li> <li>• Prayer and Liturgy Policy</li> <li>• RSHE Policy</li> <li>• SEND Word Processor Policy</li> <li>• Exams Policy</li> </ul>	
13.01	<u>Safeguarding Policy</u> (including Child Protection and Prevent) <i>Annual</i> Minor changes to this policy had been highlighted. <b>Resolved:</b> That the Committee recommend this policy be approved at the Corporation meeting.	Corporation
10.02	<u>Student Code of Conduct</u> (recommend to Corporation) - annual The changes to the policy were explained. That the policy would be reviewed annually. <b>Resolved:</b> That the Committee recommend this document be approved at the Corporation meeting.	Corporation
11.00	<b>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
11.01	There was no other business to address.	
12.00	<b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
12.01	Thursday 25 May 2023 at 5pm – please note date change. The meeting closed at 7.00pm.	