

**SUMMIT LEARNING TRUST**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY OF  
SOLIHULL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE  
HELD AT THE COLLEGE AT 5.00 PM ON WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2019**

PRESENT:	Mr L Banks	
	Mr J Bridges	- Chair
	Mrs L Gearing	
	Mr M Lone	- Student Governor
	Miss S March	- Student Governor
	Mr M Sullivan	- Principal
	Ms C Sweeney	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs J Hamilton	- Vice Principal
	Mrs M Kaur	- Clerk
	Mr J Staddon	- Vice Principal
CONSENT TO ABSENCE:	Mrs J Edwards	
	Mr O Ahmed	
	Mrs S Shingler	

0079      **MONITORING PROGRESS IN UNDERPERFORMING CURRICULUM AREAS**  
*Joseph Wright – Curriculum Leader*

Governors were welcomed to the Biology Curriculum Area and Governor introductions were made.

Governors were referred to the Curriculum Case Study (Appendix 1) and the Curriculum Area Improvement Plan (Appendix 2) which had been sent to Governors in advance of the meeting.

There had been major changes in the last year and these were starting to have impact. Staff had visited other Colleges that were successful in attaining positive VA and Curriculum Leadership had introduced pre-reading as part of all lessons, focusing on key definitions and processes. It was ensured that Y12 material was revisited wherever possible during lessons and teaching had been further restructured in line with the AQA linear specification and guidance. There had been an introduction of 'repair questions' which were questions provided after key assessments, in order to target weaker areas to ensure that teachers were closing knowledge and skills gaps. There had been an increase in the use of new maths questions and greater use of essay questions in Y13 in-year assessment. Whole cohort and targeted student interventions were in place to identify early those at risk of underperforming. One-to-one meetings with teachers took place to identify good areas of practice and areas for improvement.

The gap between the College and the AQA average had narrowed, with the biggest improvements in paper 1 and paper 3 and a considerable increase in the essay average mark which was now higher than the AQA average.

The Biozone Biology books were circulated amongst Governors and it was noted that the team had changed the way that students' booklets were used. Teaching planning teams were in place to create common teaching resources which were used by all. Extended writing exercise books were in place and this ensured that staff were able to check student progress over time.

Key assessments had been re-developed and there was a focus on AS questions in Y12 and A Level questions in Y13. Full A Level standard was now applied to Y13 from the beginning with the removal of AS questions. The 'at risk' target had been altered to a target five students approach. These were the five students in each class that were most at risk of underperforming. The team shared the tracking and monitoring of these students identifying the intervention strategies that were working well and supporting progress. The Target 5 remained in place for a term to ensure that these students continued to do well. The Target 5 students in the first term had showed a slight improvement and Y12 had performed better than Y13.

The intervention timetable was provided to all students and the year plan had changed to allow more time to revisit certain topics and more time for practice and revision towards the end of the year.

The key focus was high grades and it was anticipated that this would narrow the gap between boys and girls. There was a brand new key assessment wrapper in place which allowed students to consider what they had to do to prepare for their next key assessment and also to reflect after the assessment.

There had been an increase in VA on key assessments, and there was a consistent approach to the key assessment wrapper. High expectations were seen in five out of seven of the learning walks. Good practice was shared in team meetings and there had been changes in the way in which the team meetings took place, with meetings based on teaching and learning and separate meetings based on students and interventions. Internal work scrutinies had been undertaken as well as college wide work scrutinies.

[A CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THIS POINT WHICH WAS RECORDED IN CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX A]

**The Chair asked what the support was like for the Curriculum Leader and other staff when facing challenging conversations with staff** and was advised that regular meetings took place, along with regular checks to ensure work was being completed. One Drive helped to ensure that staff were able to share information and data.

**A Governor asked the Curriculum Leader how he would handle circumstances if a teacher felt that they did not agree with the direction that the team were taking.** They were informed that there was no teacher in place who did not recognise that changes had to be made and that the team had been involved in shaping the development plan.

**A Governor asked the Curriculum Leader if he felt confident that outcomes could improve by a further 0.23% again this year** and was advised that it was achievable and there were signs that it was moving in the right direction. It was a big leap but there had been identification of where the deficit was. As part of the lesson planning process, teachers were using the trickiest questions and modelling how the questions could be decoded and well-answered. The delivery was different, with more live feedback and live marking. Teachers were being developed to work in this way.

**A Governor asked if all staff were aware of the wider support in College for teachers** and it was confirmed that they were. There was whole staff training in place around VESPA, assessment, feedback and deliberate practice and good practice in other subjects, so there was consistency across the College.

**A Governor asked the Curriculum Leader whether there were any other initiatives that he would like to consider but had not been included in the plan** and was advised that some support classes were held from 4.10pm and getting students to stay for these was sometimes difficult. It was also difficult, because of timetables, for teachers to see more science teaching outside of College and that it would be good to see Sciences classes in Trust schools. The Curriculum Leader was planning to visit Ninestiles.

The Chair agreed that it was important to have sharing good practice strategies across the Trust.

**The Chair thanked Mr Wright for his time, feedback and the presentation which Governors agreed was very useful.**

[GOVERNORS LEFT THE BIOLOGY LABAROTORY AND RECONVENED IN THE BOARDROOM]

0080 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST/CONFIDENTIALITY/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Attention was drawn to the Articles of Association relating conflicts of interest, including but not limited to any Personal Financial Interest.

Governors were advised that if a person had any interest in a contract, proposed contract or matter under consideration, s/he should disclose the fact and take no part in the consideration, discussion or vote in respect of the contract or matter and withdraw from the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

Governors were reminded that care should be taken to ensure that they were aware of agenda items of a confidential nature. In addition, they were advised to ensure that minutes of their meetings did not include information of a confidential nature as the draft minutes were considered public documents as soon as approved by the Chair of the meeting.

The Clerk requested that Governors consider if any items were of a confidential nature. Governors were advised that these items should be considered in private.

0081 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of Any Other Business.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

0082      **RESOLVED:**      That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 9 October 2019, be approved as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

0083(a)   Skills Audit (Minute No. 0065)

The skills audit document had been shared at the previous meeting. There were some skills audits outstanding and those Governors who wished to complete the document were asked to forward this to the Chair or the Clerk upon completion.

0084      **MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

Governors were informed that there were no vacancies on the Local Governing Body and no terms of office that were due to end.

The Clerk added that there were no attendance issues to report.

0085      **ANY URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair reported the following urgent action taken since the last meeting (based on the Chair's powers to act if inaction could have a seriously detrimental effect on the College, its students, staff or parents):

- Approval of Safeguarding Policy in September 2019, which was available on the College website.

**PART ONE - REVIEW OF 2018/19**

**PRINCIPAL' S UPDATE ON 2018/19**

The Principal's Executive Summary compared data from previous years.

[A CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THIS POINT WHICH WAS RECORDED IN CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX A]

**The Chair identified that the way in which the report was read indicated that the College had made confident improvements and had responded to the points made by Ofsted and it was confirmed that this was the case.**

0086      **RESOLVED:**      That the Principal's Report (Appendix 3) be adopted.

0087      **L3 VALUE ADDED 2018/19**

Governors received the summer 2019 results for L3 VA (Appendix 4) in advance of the meeting.

**The Chair noted that the trend in data was strong which was positive and the challenge was to maintain this trend and accelerate it.** He was advised that the College had various initiatives in place to suggest that a further significant increase in data could be achieved in 19/20.

**A Governor highlighted that at times those areas that were working well were often overlooked as they were consistently good, however it was important to ensure that they were acknowledged** and was advised that those subjects were also praised and results analysed and discussed.

0088 **SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)**

Governors were advised that the SAR (Appendix 5) was required to be completed annually and submitted to Ofsted which they then used as part of their risk assessment. The document followed the Ofsted framework and made judgements within the Executive Summary. It was noted that the comments in the left hand column throughout the document, were taken from the Ofsted framework and the judgments on the right were made by the College based on their own evaluation and evidence.

[A CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THIS POINT WHICH WAS RECORDED IN CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX A]

The Chair stated that the SAR was an outward facing document and whilst the Governing Board should recognise the progress that had been made, they should also continue to challenge the team at the College to ensure that the College builds upon its' position.

**The Chair asked Student Governors whether the content of the report was in line with how they would describe their experience of the College** and they agreed that it was. However it was noted that students' suggestions to teachers did not always carry as much weight as senior leaders and this was at times deflating.

**The Chair advised Student Governors that this meeting provided an opportunity to voice their opinions.** The Principal further reassured Student Governors that he welcomed students to come and speak with him whenever they felt they would like to provide feedback or suggestions and that it was not necessary to wait until a Governing Board meeting. Student Council meetings also took place.

**A Student Governor advised that although there was a focus on consistency, different methods were used across departments and with key assessments, the content differed.** He was advised that feedback to the relevant staff would be provided.

**PART TWO – ACTIONS SINCE START OF THE 2019/20 ACADEMIC YEAR**

0089 **PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE INCLUDING MATRIX AND 100 DAY PLANS**

Governors had received the planning document (Appendix 6) and the 100 day plan (Appendix 7) in advance of the meeting. The plan was measured against the matrix and was in place to

outline what the College were working towards. Most areas were green, however there were some red and amber areas and valid reasons for these.

**The Chair asked for further information on the red and amber areas** and the following points were made:

- The review of the first day absence protocol had been completed. The College had commissioned an Educational Welfare Support team from 1 January 2020, who would work to support the College. The Educational Welfare Officers (EWO) would conduct home visits for absent students and would liaise with the LA if persistent absenteeism (PA) for those students continued, and sanctions would be put into place. PA students referred to those students whose absent rate was below 90%.

**In response to a question from the Chair** it was noted that in the first instance, the EWO would work to re-engage students back into College before a sanction was put in place.

**The Chair stressed that communication with parents was significantly important.** The Principal reassured Governors that EWOs would not be used when student absence was due to serious ill health. The EWO team had worked with other post 16 students and this was the process across many Solihull Schools. The VP for Student Experience had drafted a letter to parents informing them of the expectations relating to attendance, the role of the EWO and the possible sanctions.

**A Governor asked if parents would have the opportunity to provide feedback to the letter** and was advised that parents would be advised to contact the College if they had any questions or queries. There were a number of parents taking students out of College for family holidays during term time and the risks of taking this absence needed to be highlighted to parents.

It was agreed that a draft version of the letter be sent to Mr Banks (Governor) for approval.

**A Student Governor informed that there were occasions where students would have an early morning lesson, followed by free periods and then a supervised study lesson for the last period. On these occasions, students sometimes found it more beneficial to use the time to revise at home.** The Principal advised that timetable change requests relating to supervised study would be considered on an individual basis.

**The Chair noted that there was a distinction between in college absence** (students in College but not in lesson when they should be) **and inconvenient timetabling and queried whether there was an expectation that students remain in College during the gap periods.** It was confirmed that this was the case, unless there was a long gap where students were able to go home and then return for their lesson. This issue had been discussed at the Student Council meetings and it was agreed that students were able to speak to their Academic Coach to discuss a change in time for the supervised study session. Where possible, this could be adjusted.

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0090 **PROGRESS – KEY ASSESSMENTS**

Governors had received the in-year data for progress (Appendix 8) in advance of the meeting.

0091 **STUDENT ATTENDANCE UPDATE – DECEMBER 2019**

Governors were referred to the attendance analysis (Appendix 9) and it was noted that the attendance rate was slightly above the same point last year.

0092 **RETENTION UPDATE – DECEMBER 2019**

Governors had received the Retention Update (Appendix 10) and retention was slightly below the same point last year. This was an area of concern and was included in the SAR, as it impacted on raising achievement for students.

It was identified that at the end of Y12 if a student was not achieving, there was a tendency to leave or change courses, so there was a need to ensure that progress was being made in Y12 to prevent students from becoming disheartened.

[A CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THIS POINT WHICH WAS RECORDED IN CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX A]

0093 **SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

Governors referred to the safeguarding update (Appendix 11) and all areas were green which was positive.

0094 **COMPLAINTS REPORT – AUTUMN TERM 2019/20**

The Complaints Report (Appendix 12) identified that no formal complaints had been received from students or parents in the Autumn Term.

0095 **STAFF DISCIPLINARY REPORT – AUTUMN TERM 2019/20**

The staff disciplinary report (Appendix 13) was presented.

[A CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THIS POINT WHICH WAS RECORDED IN CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX A]

0096 **STUDENT DISCIPLINE REPORT – AUTUMN TERM 2019/20**

[A CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE AT THIS POINT WHICH WAS RECORDED IN CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX A]

**The Chair asked if there was anything specific that could be done to target and reduce incidents of poor behaviour and** was advised that the Safeguarding Lead in College was

working with the Police and Solihull College to identify key concerns and consider initiatives collaboratively.

**The Chair identified that usually feedback described that students felt safe in College and asked if this remained the case** and was advised that students did feel safe in College but if the question was asked about whether they felt safe on the way home, the response was likely to be less positive, however the College were working with the Transport police, the council and the PCSO's.

#### 0097 **FINANCIAL PLAN AND 3 TIER FORECASTS**

Governors had received a financial summary (Appendix 15) which was positive.

There was a rise in the national funding rate of 4.7% and an adjustment to Programme Cost Weightings and a large element of those were for selected A levels which were high value. This was extremely positive.

#### 0098 **FEEDBACK TO AND FROM TRUST**

Governors were advised of the appointment of the new Chair to the Trust Board and the focus at the last Trust Board meeting was on the Trust strategy.

#### 0099 **LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS**

Governors were reminded that it was a part of their responsibility to experience what happened within the College and it was anticipated that Governors try and visit the College with a focus on their link area, once a term or at least twice in an academic year. Governors were advised to speak to Mrs L Edwards to arrange their visit and it was noted that all visits were tracked on the Governor Visit Summary sheet (Appendix 16) and a very brief summary sheet be completed.

Following on from a suggestion from Mrs Lorraine Gearing, the chair advised that at the next meeting, it would be useful to focus on the careers and employability compass (Gatsby benchmarks).

The following Link Governor reports were presented:

- SEND - Mr L Banks (Appendix 17)
- Ofsted Inspection – Mr J Bridges (Appendix 18)
- Safeguarding/Prevent – Mrs J Edwards (Appendix 19)
- Gatsby Benchmark – Mrs L Gearing (Appendix 20)
- Introduction to LGB – Mr M Lone (Appendix 21)
- Principal & Chair One-to-One - (Appendix 22)
- Careers and Enterprise meeting – Mrs L Gearing (Appendix 23)



0100 **GOVERNOR TRAINING**

Governors received copies of the S4S training programme for 2019/20 and the Clerk highlighted that all Governors were able to attend courses from the central programme with a charge made for each course as detailed in the brochure.

The Clerk also highlighted that training on the new Ofsted framework was included in the training programme and these courses would be of particular benefit to Governors.

0101 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chair reported that no correspondence had been received since the previous meeting which they considered necessary to draw to the attention of Governors.

0102 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk requested Governors to identify any agenda items for the next meeting and the following were agreed:

- Careers and Employability Compass (Gatsby benchmarks)

Governors confirmed that the next meeting of the Local Governing Body would be held at the College at 5.00pm on Wednesday 4 March 2020.

The meeting closed at 18:55.

Signed: .....

(Chair of Local Governing Board)

Date: .....