

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust

Minutes of a meeting of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee
held at St Mary's College on 24 March 2022 at 5.00pm

PRESENT: Mrs L Dyas, Mr M Gallagher, Reverend W Massie, Ms J Moxon, Dr M Nolan,

IN ATTENDANCE: Primary Team: Mrs J Ely, Mrs G Ollsen, School Improvement Leads,
Mrs K Siedle, Chief Operating Officer, Primary
Secondary Team: Ms L Adamson, Vice Principal, Mr G Fitzpatrick, CEO,
Mr D Flack, Vice Principal, Mrs M Stead, St Mary's College Head of School

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Mrs M Gibson, Independent Professional Clerking Services

127 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie opened the meeting with a prayer.

128 ELECTION OF CHAIR. It was agreed for Mrs Dyas to chair the meeting.

129 APOLOGIES. It was noted that all Directors had been invited to attend the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Fearnley and Mr Sargeant

130 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. No interests were declared in addition to those previously submitted.

131 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

132 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.

It was explained that the Secondary Team was expected to attend the Year 8 options event; in view of this, their presentation would not be as detailed as usual. The presentation would be circulated to Directors and should subsequent questions arise, these should be presented to the Head of School for response.

133 PERFORMANCE UPDATE.

The Head of School reminded Directors of the school improvement priorities:

1. **Implement refined learning journeys** across the curriculum to further promote ambition for all and to ensure an absolute focus on the most crucial content and skills across subject areas.
2. **Further improve the provision of assessment** – particularly the systematic use of formative assessment to address knowledge and skills gaps.
3. **Further accelerate rates of progress** for all pupils across the school but particularly for Boys, Pupil Premium and those with SEND.

Ms Adamson summarised the key aspects of the Curriculum on a Page.

- Refined learning journeys are embedded across subject areas and colleagues are able to articulate confidently the choices that have been made in terms of sequencing and content and how these promote ambition for all.

- Department ‘deep dives’ have foregrounded key strengths in PE, Science and MFL.
- The LA SEND review also highlighted the ambition we have for all students – including those with the most complex needs and this is demonstrated through the learning journeys in place for these students.

Ms Adamson explained that the College was in a strong position in terms of Curriculum Intent, which had been refined over time. Learning journeys were well sequenced and prioritised; the English sequence for Year 7 was shared as an example.

Dr Nolan joined the meeting.

Implementation.

- Data presented was based on published observations to end of HT3 and internal descriptors for each grading.
- There was focus on knowledge, retrieval, retention.
- 6% of areas were judged to require improvement; staff involved were working with distinctive teachers to receive one to one support.

Quality Assurance.

- Extremely strong position in relation to the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Collective learning walks completed in addition to formal observations, validated excellent work across subject areas.
- The vast majority of the observation records comment on effective use of the SMC Learning cycle – with lots of opportunities for knowledge retrieval.
- All areas of QA show an extremely strong position; however, when looking into written comments, use of assessment and feedback appears to be the area for further development; addressing this would increase progress.

CPD Summary

Directors received details of professional development opportunities which were offered via core sessions, twilight for all staff; directed sessions for newly qualified teachers, trainees and those identified by the QA process; and ‘drive through’ arranged every Wednesday 8.15am to 8.40am. In addition, a weekly newsletter was published to share and reinforce practice.

Mr Flack – Impact of the Curriculum

DC2 Progress Overview:

Year 11

- Projected Attainment 8 score is an increase on 2019 outcomes.
- English and Maths basics at 4+ projected to increase by 2% to 73% vs 2019 (including November resit results).
- Increase in the % of students projected a Standard Pass EBACC (63% vs 52% in 2019)
- Performance across all subjects relatively consistent at all Threshold measures.

Focus Areas:

- MFL progress measure is lower than other subjects.
- Internal gap projected in progress of PP students, SEN-K students and boys.

Headline Trends

Headlines	Nat 2019 Standard / Strong	SMC 2019		SMC 2020		SMC 2021		SMC 2022 – Proj DC2		Comments
		Standard / Strong	Standard / Strong	Standard / Strong	Standard / Strong	Standard/strong	Standard/strong	Standard/strong	Standard/strong	
Attainment 8	46.7	54.1		55.57		57.87		55.33		Significant increase on 2019
Progress 8	-0.03	0.76		0.93		1.28		0.76		In line with 2019 projections
E & M (Basics)	65% / 43%	72%	51%	78%	54%	82%	58%	73%	51%	Slight increase on 2019 outcomes
EBacc	25% / 17%	52%	38%	57%	42%	63%	39%	63%	39%	Significant increase on 2019 outcome

Figure 1.2 – Headline DfE Measures – Year 11 2021/2022. Performance consistently above the last available national performance points.

Mr Flack explained that:

- Year 11 data indicated the P8 score would exceed that achieved in 2019.
- 100 students had been identified who wished to improve the English grade achieved in Year 10 using Teacher Assessment Grades; 63 had improved, some by two levels; this demonstrated the robustness of the TAG system.
- EBACC – national entry rates = 40%; 90% of the SMC cohort studied the EBACC curriculum; this demonstrated the ambition by, and for, students.

Directors were reminded of the presentation they received in the autumn term which highlighted the strong, academic core which supported the curriculum model. It was emphasised that this did not restrict the offer or commitment to PE and RE.

The CEO advised that he was confident the level of rigour was reflective of the commitment to academic achievement, balanced with a broad and wide curriculum offer.

Year 13

- Strong A-Level projections with 12 Subjects Projecting RED ALPS scores.
- Politics and History projections are significantly higher than historic actual outcomes but there have been significant changes in the structure and staffing within the subjects since students were last externally examined which have contributed to this.

Focus Areas:

- Business Studies and Creative Media projecting ALPS 7 and 8 respectively.

Directors were informed that performance league tables would be published later in the year. This would not be helpful to St Mary's College as a truly inclusive school. TAGs for English, history and geography would not be counted; this would impact on the college's position in the tables. In response, Directors acknowledged the support leaders would need to manage the public perception of this.

Year 10

- Projected Attainment 8 score is an increase on the score obtained in 2019 outcomes
- English and Maths basics at 4+ projected to increase by 4% to 75% vs 2019 (including November resit results).
- Increase in the % of students projected a Standard Pass EBACC (64% vs 52% in 2019).
- Performance across all subjects relatively consistent at all threshold measures.

Focus Areas:

- MFL progress measure is lower than other subjects.
- Internal gap projected in progress of PP students and boys.

Years 7-9

- Progress in all year groups is good.
- Virtually no PP gap in year 8 progress in all subjects.
- SEN progress comparable to non-SEN in all year groups.
- Males outperforming females in Maths and Science in Year 9.

Focus Areas:

- Progress in creative subjects.
- Internal gap projected in progress of males in Year 8 and PP in Year 7.

Next Steps (Based on progress data and quality assurance overview):

- CPD programme implemented around effective use of assessment and feedback for remainder of this academic year. Opportunities for sharing of best practice in ‘Summer Showcase’.
- Phase 2 of year 11 ‘catch up’ tuition to commence next week with underperforming PP students prioritised.
- Final diagnostic assessments/mocks have taken place over past 2 weeks – to inform in class support/challenge and revision.
- Bespoke strategies in place for all underperforming Year 13 students in Business and progress discussed weekly in all SSA meetings. Examiner workshop for these students prior to Easter.

Directors asked if there were any common areas identified amongst the small number of staff judged to require improvement. In response, it was explained that assessment and checking had been identified as a key area of inconsistency; this would be addressed.

College leaders acknowledged that more time was needed to be allocated to further discuss the curriculum with Directors.

Directors pointed out the potential for Ofsted to scrutinise the curriculum in terms of breadth and balance, and the Key Stage structure. In response, it was explained that although the model appeared complex, it had been designed and refined over a long period of time. It had been triangulated with outcomes and pupil and parent voice. Leaders expressed confidence that the curriculum model provided a deep experience of subjects including the EBACC option. It was emphasised that few comprehensive organisations delivered 90% EBACC experience alongside a 10% commitment to PE and RE.

Directors asked if changes were planned to the history curriculum to address current issues relating to racism. In response, it was explained that the current offer was considered to be balanced, and no changes were planned in the short term. Racism and other current issues were addressed via the PSHE curriculum. Lots of time had been allocated to address diversity and equality issues with Years 7, 8 and 9 allocated one hour each week to question and understand a variety of social issues.

The secondary team were thanked for their presentation and left the meeting.

Primary Schools Update

Mrs Ely reported that three inspections had been conducted over the last eight weeks; these had provided areas to celebrate and provided a clear way forward.

Directors received, for information, the Ofsted report published following the inspection of St Anthony's Primary School on 25 and 26 January 2022. It was explained that the inspection had been conducted by two inspectors over two days. Prior to their arrival, a 90 minute telephone call had taken place; this had given an opportunity to 'sell the school' and outline the self-evaluation. School Leaders commended the judgement which had confirmed the school to be a good school. Key points of the report were highlighted:

- Inspectors had observed the culture of the school which had been apparent in the environment.
- The good behaviour of pupils in the classroom and at playtimes had been commended; the quick and fair way in which disruption in the classroom was addressed had been recognised. This had been a result of considerable work and achieved over a very short period of time.
- Inspectors had commented on 'the buzz about reading' in the school.
- It had been reported pupils enjoyed mathematics.
- Clear systems and processes were in place to identify and support pupils with SEND.
- The Trust was involved in all aspects of the school's development; this had been recognised in all three inspections.
- Arrangements for safeguarding were effective.

The COO(P) reported that staff had been aware English and maths would be subjects for deep dives. She outlined the process for this and explained that inspectors had recognised the strong curriculum in place. They had also acknowledged plans were in place to strengthen teaching of art which was judged to be the weakest area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The school's curriculum in some subjects was not sufficiently detailed
- Leaders were not clear about how they use enrichment opportunities to develop pupils' wider personal development. Pupils had found it difficult to articulate responses to questions relating to activities; lessons had been learned from this and would be shared with others.

In response to a question, it was reported that the experience and outcome had been shared with other school leaders.

Directors asked how inspectors had sought the views of pupils. In response, it was explained that inspectors had interviewed pupil; they had asked questions relating to the curriculum, retrieval, key themes and links to current learning; this had been conducted without involvement from staff. The inspector had selected the pupils and they had demonstrated they understood the questions and were able to respond despite a level of nervousness.

Directors commended the content of the report, especially the obvious change in culture and ethos; they asked that congratulations and thanks be conveyed to all involved.

The COO(P) concluded that inspectors had commended as best practice, the Trust's plans for succession planning and development of future leaders.

Reverend Massie left the meeting.

Primary School Mid-Term Reviews.

Directors' attention was drawn to a report which provided an overview of the current position of key areas of measure in each school.

The COO(P) stated that mid-term reviews had been conducted for all schools and reports produced which demonstrated improvements. The information had been collated following meetings led by the Executive Team, who held school leaders to account for performance.

The reviews of the schools had identified common areas of strength and development, and although schools due for inspection were prioritised, the rigorous approach was applied equally to all school leaders.

Directors questioned the wording used in the self-evaluation: (*Improving, strong repair, repair improving and improving repair*). In response it was explained that although judgements did not correlate with Ofsted, they provided an opportunity for Heads of Schools to judge their own school.

Directors asked if the criteria used were weighted. In response, it was explained that the criteria aligned with the school improvement judgements not those used by Ofsted.

Directors sought clarification on the repair improvement judgement for St Vincent's. In response, it was explained that this reflected the level of curriculum development required and the absence of the Head of School.

The COO(P) stated that very often, Heads of School underestimated the position of their schools.

Directors asked if external support had been sourced for EYFS development. In response, the close working relationship developed with the LA EYFS team was outlined, especially for children new to the country.

Concern was expressed that EYFS had been impacted by social deprivation especially during lockdown when children had been isolated for long periods with limited access to provision. In response, it was explained this had been recognised and the SLE for EYFS was supporting schools to address the issues. Health checks had been conducted remotely for two-year old's during Covid; this had resulted in some areas for development not being identified in the way they would normally.

Directors were assured that there was a common, trust-wide approach to EYFS provision based around children's needs whilst preparing them for Year 1. Resources were equally distributed; phonics and numeracy were taught consistently and the Nellie Programme for speech and language was adapted to meet individual needs. Curriculum development and planning had been adjusted to reflect feedback from Ofsted and the SLE would continue to review key drivers.

Head of School Reports

Mrs Ollsen drew attention to the St Richard's Head of School report, copies of which were presented at the meeting. She explained that the format of the report was consistent for all schools; these would be presented at the Board meeting the following week.

Directors were reminded that St Richard's had been judged to require improvement following an Ofsted inspection in February 2020. Two subsequent monitoring visits had judged the school to be maintaining good quality education and confirmed a number of the key areas identified for improvement had been addressed.

Headlines:

- EYFS had been identified as requires improvement in 2020. A highly experienced SLE had been deployed to support and the quality of education has become consistently embedded and the impact was evident.

The outdoor environment had required significant improvement; funds had been provided by the Trust to address this. The work required had been delayed due to Covid but was expected to be completed for the summer term.

- The school has continued to drive forward its curriculum.
- A curriculum brochure had been produced which provided clear intent and lesson design for all subjects.
- A SEN hub and strong pastoral team continued to be developed. The school had the highest number of Pupil Premium pupils and was situated in a highly deprived area.

Directors asked if an update on the housing development in the area had been received. In response, it was noted that the development was progressing faster than expected; it was hoped pupil numbers would increase as a result; leaders would be proactive in terms of how the school would be marketed.

Directors acknowledged the high pupil turnover and asked if records had been maintained to demonstrate the progress made by pupils who had continued through the school. In response, it was confirmed records were maintained using a model applied at St Charles, which had similar issues.

Leadership and management – development of middle leaders had been a key area of focus. Coaching had been provided on progressive sequencing and how this would be articulated.

Safeguarding – an LA audit had been conducted and validated that safeguarding was of the highest priority at the school.

Quality of education – the core team had conducted a deep dive which had shown reading to be a strength of the school.

Directors sought clarification on the scheme used for phonics. In response, it was reported that Read, Write Inc was well embedded; funding had been received in 2019 to introduce the programme, due to low performance.

Development of core subjects remained a priority although maths teaching was becoming a strength. Deep dives had been conducted in reading, writing and science; maths would be reviewed the following week.

Directors asked what action was being taken to further improve progress in writing. In response, it was explained writing had been impacted most by Covid and although attainment and progress had not been as rapid as leaders would want, they were satisfied that provision was strong.

Directors asked which subjects would likely be selected for a deep dive during the next inspection. In response, it was suggested that history was the most improved area and art, which was less developed, would possibly be selected.

Leaders gave assurance that planning documents for all subjects were consistent.

Cultural capital enhancements – staff worked alongside the Children's University to provide a variety of opportunities. There was a strong parent association in place and time was allocated for pupil reflection.

Behaviour and attitudes – although consistently good in school, a number of challenges, many created as a result of external issues, influenced the behaviour of some pupils. Bespoke support packages were provided, as appropriate.

Attendance for the autumn term = 94.5%.

The Chair commended the detailed information presented. She advised that she had visited the school recently and had been impressed by what she had observed, especially in terms of development opportunities for staff.

134 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

RESOLVED: that date and times of next meeting be confirmed as 7 June 2022 (time to be confirmed).

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signature of chair

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Minutes of a meeting of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee
held at St Mary's College on 24 March 2022 at 5.00pm

PART B - NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Confidential items covered by the Articles of Association.

135 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

136 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES. There were no matters arising.