



MidKent College

Authors: Clerk for the Corporation
Chair of Quality, teaching & learning Committee
Principal

Recommended and agreed by the Governing Body: 16/12/15

Overall Effectiveness Grade: Requires Improvement

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**Governance
Self-Assessment
Report 2014-15**

Context

This report addresses some of the key question on governance set out in the September 2015 Common Inspection Framework (CIF) and Further Education Inspectors Handbook (FEHB) used to inspect Colleges along with the self-assessment input from the sub-committees.

1	Overview	Evidence and Source
	<p>The Governing Body comprises 23 members. Membership includes two staff together with the Student Union President (Sabbatical Post) and Vice President. The full board meets five times a year, with sub-committees meeting more frequently. There are link governors for each of the college’s teaching faculties. The board is focused on ensuring the College is making progress towards achieving its strategic objectives. Members also attend a Strategic Governor/SLT Away Day which has a particular focus on long-term strategic planning.</p> <p>Governors have a clear view of their role and responsibilities and provide the Principal and senior staff with good levels of challenge and support to ensure the College improves and has a positive impact on the communities it serves. They make informed and transparent decisions with all minutes and papers (unless they are deemed confidential) available to the public on the College website and by request. Confidential minutes are annually reviewed by the Search & Governance Committee to consider if they can be released as public documents.</p> <p>The Governing Body complied with the Foundation Code of Governance (adopted 23 March 2012) and adopted the Audit & Accountability Annex to the Code on 11 June 2013. The Search & Governance Committee reviewed the new Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and went through the ‘must’ and ‘should’ items. They agreed an action plan and recommended adoption of the Code. The Governing Body adopted the Code in July 2015. They are either compliant with, or working towards being compliant with, all of the requirements.</p>	<p>Governing Body Minutes</p> <p>Search Committee Minutes</p>

<p>Prudent financial management and highly effective commercial diversification through which a third of the College income is generated, has enabled significant investment in buildings, resources and staff development to the benefit of students.</p> <p>Despite strong leadership, and a consistently high level of commitment, the Governing Body recognises that it Requires Improvement. The Governing Body recognises that prior to the 2015 OFSTED inspection it relied too heavily on the internal quality reports of the College. As a result, the Governing Body failed to anticipate the level of change to students study programmes, changes to the Common Inspection Framework and the resulting Requires Improvement Grade for the College overall.</p> <p>Subsequent to the OFSTED inspection report, the Governing Body has made a series of key changes intended to address its weaknesses. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing quality, teaching, learning and outcome for students at the centre of the Governing Body agendas and that of its sub-committees. • Visiting the Governing Bodies of other colleges to understand areas of best practice. • Introducing monthly Quality, Teaching & Learning monitoring calls to assess progress against the Post Inspection Action Plan. • Ensuring all faculties have a proactive link governor. • Engaging an English and maths board, chaired by domain experts to provide independent advice. • Increasing the training of governors through regular training sessions five times a year. • Engaging 3rd party consultants to review the quality inspection frameworks and ensure they remain current with the latest expectations of government. • Seeking to increase the level of external Further Education expertise on the Governing Body and inviting Curriculum Managers and Faculty Directors to attend and present to the Board on items of specific detail. 	<p>Finance Committee Minutes</p> <p>Governing Body Minutes</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the volume of Link and Informal visits (GIV) taking place in order to validate information and help Governors understand more about the core operations of teaching, learning and assessment <p>It remains too early to determine if these changes at the Governing Body level, together with the many changes within the college, will be sufficient to deliver the rate of change in outcomes for students that Governors and staff desire. If further changes are desirable or necessary, the Governing Body is committed to make them.</p>	
<p>2</p>	<p>Do governors demonstrate an ambitious vision, have high expectations for what all students can achieve and ensure high standards of provision and care for students?(CIF) In particular, do governors support and strengthen the provider’s leadership and contribute to shaping its strategic direction? (FEHB)</p>	
	<p>The Governing Body are instrumental in setting the strategic priorities for the College. These are updated annually through the Governing Body strategic away day, and recorded within an annual statement of strategic priority. The first priority is provision of first-rate teaching, learning and assessment.</p>	<p>GB away day. 15 May 2015</p>

3	What strategic priority do governors give to the provision of English and mathematics to ensure that students improve their levels of skills in these subjects compared with their starting points? (FEHB)	
	<p>Following the 2015 OFSTED inspection, and the issuing of the revised Common Inspection Framework, the Governing Body and Senior Leadership recognised that it must radically improve its provision of English and maths. Having extensively researched best practices within successful FE Colleges, the college has subsequently: placed English and maths at the centre of the curriculum timetabling; employed more specialist teachers; and created specialist English and maths centres at the centre of the college facilities. To advise on best practise and to monitor implementation the Governing Body has appointed a specialist English and maths board.</p> <p><i>It remains to be seen whether this allocation of resources will deliver the necessary improvements in English and maths results or whether further changes will be necessary.</i></p>	<p>QTL minutes</p> <p>English and maths board minutes</p> <p>PIAP, and QIP for 2014/15</p>
4	How successfully are ambitions for the college's performance set, reviewed and communicated with staff, students, employers and other partners, and what impact has this had on the quality of provision and outcomes for all students? (FEHB)	
	<p>The Governing Body has set a clear target that the college must be judged at least Good within two years, with a clear expectation that it must strive for Outstanding outcomes for all students. To deliver this goal, the college has developed a clear Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) / College Improvement plan which can be monitored through its progress against a set of core and stretching Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed with governors. These KPIs are monitored monthly through the QTL monitoring calls and presented at every Governing Body.</p> <p>The PIAP has been developed and enhanced through a series of workshops with governors, staff and learner representatives. Progress against these targets is reviewed at each relevant sub-</p>	<p>College KPI metrics</p> <p>QTL monitoring call minutes.</p> <p>Away Day 15/5/15</p>

	<p>committee meeting and at the full governing body. The targets are communicated at Executive team and SLT team meetings and are validated through Link and informal visits to curriculum areas by Governors.</p> <p>Further work needs to be done to communicate this to employers and this is included in the action plan.</p>	<p>PIAP/Advisory Committees</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>How well do Governors know the college and understand its strengths and weaknesses? (FEHB)</p>	
	<p>The Governing Body’s knowledge of the provider’s strengths and weaknesses comes through the triangulation of information from multiple sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ detailed Governing Body papers presented by the senior leadership team in Governing Body meetings and subsequent support and challenge of senior staff ➤ detailed sub-committee papers and subsequent support and challenge of staff members ➤ student union representation on Governing Body and sub-committees ➤ the annual student voice survey ➤ progress data provided to the QTL Committee ➤ detailed faculty knowledge through the faculty link governor scheme and through governors informal visits. <p><i>Despite this extensive range of data sources, the Governing Body recognises that it failed to adequately predict the outcome of the last OFTSED report as it was over reliant on internal quality reports. To seek to address this, the Governing Body has employed third party consultants to audit regularly the quality inspection regime and it has increased the level of expert FE representation on the Governing Body.</i></p>	<p>GB & Committee minutes.</p> <p>Circulation of HMI letters to Governors</p> <p>Link/GIV visits & feedback</p>

<p>6</p>	<p>How successfully do leaders, managers and governors secure and sustain improvements to teaching, learning and assessment through high quality professional development, including developing management and leadership capacity and robust performance management to tackle weaknesses and promote good practice across all types of provision? (FEHB)</p> <p>How do Governors challenge and hold senior leaders and managers to account for improving the quality of learning and the effectiveness of performance management systems?</p>	
	<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are presented at each Governing Body, together with a detailed Principal’s report. These are robustly reviewed and challenged. Teaching, learning and assessment indicators are assessed in further detail in monthly quality monitoring calls, with finance and business KPIs being reviewed and challenged in appropriate termly sub-committees. Areas of weakness are challenged and improvement plans discussed in detail by members of the sub-committees, predominantly the governing Body, Quality, teaching & learning committee and also Risk & Audit.</p> <p>Governors have developed useful links, both formal and informal, with faculties within the College, and use these well to listen to staff and students; these links provide important evidence to allow triangulation and the identification of risk areas.</p> <p>A range of training sessions, both external and internal, helps ensure Governors have a good understanding of self-assessment. For examples, attending external events such as the AOC Teaching, Learning & assessment – developing the role of Governor in monitoring quality.</p> <p><i>Further improvements can be made by more clearly developing plans to develop management capacity, particularly middle managers.</i></p>	<p>QTL Committee and Calls</p> <p>Link Governor scheme with all faculties</p> <p>Training session before GB meetings and external training when available</p>

7	<p>Do governors evaluate the quality of the provision and outcomes through accurate and robust self-assessment which is rigorous and takes into account the views of students, employers and other stakeholders, and use the findings to develop capacity for sustainable improvement? (CIF)</p> <p>How successfully planned and managed learning programmes are, the curriculum and careers advice so that all students get a good start and are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment?</p>	
	<p>The College revised its self-assessment process for 2014/15 in the light of inspection findings from Ofsted in March 2015. A range of training sessions both external and internal help ensure Governors have a good understanding of self-assessment. For examples attending external events such as the AOC Teaching, Learning & assessment – developing the role of governor in monitoring quality.</p> <p>The self-assessment process begins with faculty areas and course teams compiling a self-assessment, aligned against the key areas of the Ofsted Common inspection framework. This is then scrutinised and challenged by an internal panel which includes the Link governors for each area.</p> <p>Governors, who have particularly strong business and financial expertise, monitor the college's performance carefully. They have rightly sought explanations for the dip in performance in 2013/14. Although the reports that governors receive from leaders and managers are broadly accurate, they do not always contain sufficient analysis of key indicators. For example, reports do not contain clear information on the relationship between students' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Governors have developed useful links, both formal and informal, with faculties within the college, and use these well to listen to staff and students. Student representatives on the governing body are articulate and influential.</p>	Ofsted report, March 2015

	<p>The involvement of Student and Staff Governors in Committees and Governing Body meetings enables Governors to understand and challenge the experiences of student and staff at the College. Student representatives on the Governing Body are articulate and influential.</p> <p>The advisory committees of Maidstone and Medway have a representation of employers from those particular communities that helps gain the views of employers. In addition, a survey of employers that the college works with is undertaken each year as part of FE choices in April of each year.</p> <p><i>Despite this robust review process, the Governing Body recognises that it was overly reliant on the information provided by the internal quality systems. To address this in 2015, the college has: engaged external consultants to ensure the internal quality measures are representative of OFSTED's views; taken careful note of the outcomes of the OFSTED support and challenge visits and more carefully triangulated information from students, employers and governor visits.</i></p>	
8	<p>How do governors ensure that learning programmes have suitable breadth, depth and relevance so that they meet any relevant statutory requirements, as well as the needs and interests of students and employers, nationally and in the local community? (CIF)</p> <p>How do leaders, managers and governors collaborate with employers and other partners to ensure that the range and content of the <u>provision is aligned to local and regional priorities (CIF)</u></p>	
	<p>The range of scope of provision is reviewed annually within the Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee which robustly challenges the senior leadership to demonstrate that the scope meets the needs of the community and employers. (CIF)</p> <p>This will be enhanced in 2015/16 by clearer demonstration to both QTL and Governing Body that the provision fully meets statutory requirements.</p>	<p>QTL committee minutes.</p> <p>Audit & Risk Committee minutes and Auditor reports</p>

<p>Business planning procedures take place each year as part of the colleges business planning cycle. These are reported at Governing Body, and also utilise the expertise of various Governors, and advisory committee members to help ensure the curriculum reflects local needs.</p> <p>Leaders and managers focus well on developing a curriculum that aligns to the employment needs in Medway and Kent. Senior leaders have developed strong links with a number of key partners in the complex regional landscape straddled by the college, including local councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership, Chambers of Commerce, and regional and local employers.</p> <p>Employers are increasingly involved in curriculum planning process; they provide valuable advice on curriculum design, and resources in many subjects, for example hairdressing, health care, hospitality, and performing arts. The Advisory committees, and wider engagement with employers help them to comment on the design of curriculum and the outputs in relation to skills of students entering the workplace.</p> <p>Local business was involved in validating curriculum plans in ICT and business to ensure that content was valid, relevant and up to date.</p> <p>Faculty curriculum plans focus well on maximising students’ opportunities to move straight into employment; further work is needed to assess the extent to which students’ destinations at the end of their courses match their intentions at the start.</p> <p>The college engagement with local employers, and alignment to local and regional, is regularly presented in the Governing Body Principal’s Report. This includes engagement at strategic level with key local stakeholders, such as the local enterprise partnership (LEP), local authorities, MPs and local and regional business groups.</p> <p>The Search & Governance Committee conduct an annual review of the skills audit to ensure that the skills and experience of Governors meets the requirements of the Board. As vacancies arise any skills gaps are addressed and taken into account when appointing new members. Governors currently represent local employers, (3) Local Government, (1) education (1). There is further representation of local employers on the advisory boards of each campus.</p>	<p>Advisory committee minutes</p> <p>Ofsted report, March 2015</p> <p>Principals reports to Governing body</p> <p>Search & governance committee minutes</p>
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9	How effectively do leaders, managers and governors monitor the <u>progress</u> of groups of students so that none is disadvantaged or underachieves? (FEHB)	
	<p>Stretching targets for the progress of each learner are set within each students PLP (Personal Learning Plan), and this can be monitored by the student, the relevant member of teaching staff and by parents. This allows action to be taken at the learner level to ensure none is disadvantaged or underachieves. This data is rolled up into monthly data for each group of students which is monitored at a faculty level – and can be discussed with the relevant link governor. Summary data is then presented to the QTL and Governing Body.</p> <p>This will be enhanced in 2015/16 by presentation of more information on the progress of individual students. For example, specifically those with identified learning needs, and those from different ethnic groups.</p>	QTL Committee minutes
10	How effectively do leaders, managers and governors monitor the <u>progression</u> and <u>destinations</u> of their students (including whether students enter secure and sustained employment) and use this information to improve provision? (FEHB)	
	<p>In addition to monitoring students' progression on and between courses, the college completes a comprehensive destination survey each year. In 2014/15 the survey captured the actual destinations 6 months after leaving the college in July 2013/14 for 5701 of the 6612, or 86% of students in scope.</p> <p>Of these, 93.2% had positive destinations which is either counted as progression to the next level of study, progression to University, or progression into employment.</p> <p>In 2015/16 the college seeks to increase the rate of contacts to 90%. The progression data is used to assess the success of each course and is part of the data used to identify if that course will be continued in future years.</p>	Destinations reports submitted to committees and Governing body

<p>11</p>	<p>How do leaders, managers and governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promote equality and diversity, tackle bullying and discrimination and narrow any gaps in achievement between different groups of students? (CIF) • Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in education and training? • Work with other partners to widen participation and support students' progression to further learning and/or employment relevant to their personal circumstances? (NEETS) (FEHB) • Use the funding for students with high needs so that their individual learning programmes challenge them to develop their independence and prepare them for their future? • Prepare students for successful life in modern Britain and promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs? 	
	<p>The HR Director presented the E&D Annual Review to the Governing Body at their meeting on 20 May 2015 to bring them up to date and ensure they were aware of their roles and responsibilities. This is also included in the induction pack for new Governors. The high quality of papers produced enables Governors to understand their roles and responsibilities and identify any gaps in achievement. This includes an annual report of disciplinary cases as well as regular visits to curriculum areas to talk about student behaviour.</p> <p>The Diversity & Inclusion committee, which reports into the Governing Body and has a governor on the group, highlights and identifies key performance of different groups and agrees strategies to further reduce these gaps. It also helps to recognise and embed equality & diversity into teaching, learning and assessment. The introduction of diversity champions, and a lead for equality & diversity working across college, has helped further promote this amongst staff and students.</p> <p>The college successfully gained Investors in Diversity accreditation (IID) in 2013; this is due for renewal in 2016.</p>	<p>GB minutes 20/5/15</p> <p>Diversity & Inclusion committee.</p>

	<p>The college also promotes equality and diversity through the student union that has an effective group of sub committees and champions that promote values to different students.</p> <p>The college is working with local partners to ensure students not in employment, education or training, (NEETs) are supported by the College. The use of subcontracting helps to provide opportunities to support local key organisations who are well equipped to work with NEET students and help signpost students at the college who are at risk of leaving.</p> <p>Governors received an update on Equality & Diversity Annual Report in May 2015.</p>	
12	<p>How do leaders, managers and governors make sure that safeguarding arrangements to protect young people and students meet all statutory and other government requirements, promote their welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism?.</p>	
	<p>Arrangements for safeguarding students are good. Staff are trained well to recognise most risks to students, and managers with specific responsibilities for keeping students safe are skilled and thorough in monitoring any problems. Links with external agencies are good. Security personnel, staff and students combine very effectively to provide a safe and welcoming environment for each other. Safeguarding leaders have developed plans to raise awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism through the Prevent agenda, although staff and students have not yet had comprehensive training on this subject.</p> <p>The Governing Body agreed the Safeguarding Policy in December 2014 and agreed it was fit for purpose. Safeguarding is a regular slot on the training cycle for Governors and updates are brought to the Board as required.</p> <p>We have a lead Governor on Safeguarding who has completed the necessary training and attends the internal Safeguarding meetings. The College runs regular training on the Safeguarding/PREVENT strategy and is a compulsory component of training for all staff.</p>	<p>GB minutes 17/12/14</p>

	<p>Governors have received training, and updates on how the Prevent agenda is being developed at the college. However, there is some further work to ensure that all staff continue to be trained and supported to promote British values.</p> <p>All staff for whom it is required to have that required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check have been checked or are awaiting confirmation from the DBS office, with risk assessments having been carried out. The HR department monitor compliance. AOC advise that Colleges are not eligible to request barring information for Governors as under the new definition they are not considered as working in regulated activity.</p> <p>Governors received an overview of legislative change for young people with Special Education Needs (SEN) and Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) and their implications and responsibilities for FE College including Governors.</p>	
13	To what extent does the Governing Body comply with its requirement in the Foundation Code of Governance and the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges?	
	<p>The Governing Body complied with the Foundation Code of Governance (adopted 23 March 2012) and adopted the Audit & Accountability Annex to the Code on 11 June 2013. The Search & Governance Committee reviewed the new Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and went through the 'must' and 'should' items. They agreed an action plan and recommended adoption of the Code. The Governing Body adopted the Code in July 2015. They are either compliant or working towards being compliant with all of the requirements</p>	<p>S&G Minutes 5/5/15</p> <p>GB minutes 15/7/15</p>

Governance Improvement Plan (GIP)

	Areas for Improvement	Target	Action	Action Owner	Completion date
1	Ensure specific focus on improving the quality, teaching, learning and outcomes for students	The College is graded Good at the OFSTED re-inspection	Quality & Performance is placed at the centre of the Governing Body agenda	Chairman	
2	Governors systematically challenge senior leaders so that the effective deployment of staff and resources secures excellent outcomes for students. Governors to provide challenge as well as support through the use of reports including in-depth analysis of the key indicators and understanding of the link to student progress		1. Introduce monthly quality monitoring calls to review KPIs 2. Increase Governing Body time focussed on triangulating data and providing robust challenge.	Chairman of QTL Committee Chairman	
3	Increased the focus of review to ensure rapid progress in English and maths,, which were highlighted as critical areas for improvement	Rapid progress in English and maths progress is observed leading to improved outcomes for students.	Create English and maths panel to advise the Governing Body. Ensure panel advice is carefully considered at each Governing Body.	Principal	Done
4	Leaders, managers and governors have created a culture that enables students and staff to excel. They are committed unwaveringly to setting high expectations for staff and students' conduct and achievement.	[Address issues from Staff Survey			

	Areas for Improvement	Target	Action	Action Owner	Completion date
5	Ensure that Governors are presented with the right training and support to enable them ask the right questions that help them see the improvements in Teaching and Learning.				
6	Enhance the Governing Body has adequate expertise in Further Education to identify changes to expectations or best practise.	Governing Body has one or more FE domain experts	Search and Governance to identify governors with current FE domain experience.	S&G	Dec 2015