

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 2 November 2021 at 4.00pm

Present physically K Brown, ASFC Staff member K Sida-Nicholls
ASFC: K Points, Vice Chair N Savvas, CEO
S Daley, Chair

Present virtually: J Wakelam N Burgoyne
L Chapman S Healey Pearce

In attendance: A Adamson, Deputy Head of Centre OSFC
A Hurrell, Group Head of Quality
A Wright, Group Head of Progression
D Gartland, Principal ASFC
G Chittock-Nash, Group Vice Principal Students and Admission
J Robson, Head of Centre OSFC + Group strategic lead for EDI
R Bamford, Group Vice Principal Data and MI
S Gales, Governance Professional
S-L Neesam, Group Head of Safeguarding
S Small, Assistant Principal ASFC

Apologies: C Flintoff

1. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Committee recognised Sue Daley as the Chair and Karen Points as the Vice Chair of the Educational Excellence Committee for 2021/22, as appointed by the Board at their meeting on 8 July 2021.

2. **Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence**

No conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared.

Apologies were accepted from Clare Flintoff.

3. **Minutes of the LGB Committee meetings held on 28 and 30 June 2021**

The minutes of the meetings held on 28 and 30 June 2021 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

4. **Matters Arising from the LGB Committee meetings held on 28 and 30 June 2021**

The matters arising from the meeting were summarised in the report and all actions reported had either been completed or, where appropriate an update had been provided on progress.

MA1 SGales is working with ASFC's SLT and OSFC's SLT to develop first hand weeks and governance links and will feedback at the next meeting.

MA2 Complete

MA3 Complete

NBurgoyne and LChapman joined the meeting at 4.15pm

5. **Committee Terms of Reference and Committee Skillset**

Committee members received, considered and **approved** the draft Terms of Reference and Committee Skillset provided.

RBamford to provide a short 15-minute training session on understanding ALPs data at the start of the next meeting.

Committee members to approach SGales if they would like additional training.

Action

RBamford

EEC

6. Update on Executive Structure

The roles of the senior executive team:

- Nikos Savvas, CEO
- Colin Shaw, Principal of West Suffolk College's Sixth Form Provision, and Group Quality improvement and Group Quality Assurance
- Chris Meredith, Executive Dean of Higher Education, University Studies and Group Learner Resource centres
- George Chittock-Nash, Vice Principal of Student Services and Admissions
- John Raffel, CFO
- Laraine Moody, Principal of Strategic Growth and Partnership and Group Marketing and Escalator
- Richard Stevenson, Group Director of Operations
- Rob Bamford, Vice Principal of Group Data and Group MI
- Simon Graham, Group Director of HR and Shared Services
- Suzannah Gales, Clerk and Governance Professional
- David Gartland, Principal of Abbeygate Sixth Form College and Group Enrichment
- Jake Robson, Head of Centre of One Sixth Form College and Group EDI

NSavvas explained that the Principals in the senior executive team also have responsibilities across the Group:

- Chris Meredith's direct line reports oversee learning resources centre provision across the Group.
- Colin Shaw's direct line reports oversee quality assurance, quality improvement, initial teacher training and CPD, supported learning and SEND provision across the Group.
- David Gartland's direct line reports oversee enrichment across the Group.
- Jake Robson's direct line reports oversee equality, diversity and inclusion and best practice sharing across the Group.
- Laraine Moody's direct line reports oversee partnerships, projects, escalator and marketing across the Group.

The staff in attendance also introduced themselves and summarised their roles.

SGraham to share structure chart with the Committee.

SGraham

7. Analysis of 2020/21

7.i-iii. **KPI Metrics, Results and Destinations**

The Committee received and considered the reports provided.

SSmall summarised the key metrics at ASFC in 2021/22 and noted that the results were very high with 88.8% of all grades on target with minor variances by EDIM; and an ALPS report Grade1. These results allowed almost 90% of students to enter their first-choice university. There are no areas that represent a serious cause for concern nor any areas that would open the college up to serious criticism.

The Committee queried the number (98) of students undertaking the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). SSmall confirmed that students can choose this course as an additional component of their study programme as an EPQ enhances students' university applications and, for some, can lower the UCAS tariff since it also carries UCAS points. NSavvas added that the qualification was very valuable to the students but added that since it is an additional component, we need to be careful about growing the numbers too substantially since no additional income is received for its delivery.

The Committee queried what is being done to narrow the 8.2% gender gap. DGartland replied that it is not a trend local to ASFC. Nationally females tend to outperform males in A-Levels; and it is important to note that the more meaningful gender gap measure is often value added.

The Committee commended the strength of teaching and learning to support students to achieve such high grades.

The Committee queried what is being done to narrow the 10.9% variance in favour of non-SEN students. DGartland noted that this percentage is a very small sample size (13 students) however agreed to investigate this further and include commentary in the SAR.

DGartland

The Committee commended the rigorous approach to Teacher-Assessed Gradings (TAGs) used across the Trust which resulted in very few appeals compared to other providers. The Committee queried when national rates will be published. RBamford confirmed that Ofqual have confirmed that this year will act as a “transition year” to reflect the recovery period and grade boundaries will be set by exam boards at a “midway” point between 2021 and 2019, the last time exams were sat before the pandemic. Grades are expected to return to normal by 2023.

RBamford

The Committee queried the methodology used to group results. RBamford to provide commentary on reporting metrics to provide context on the data provided; as well as information on their prior attainment to help the Committee understand the distance travelled whilst at our colleges.

The Committee queried why ASFC has a greater proportion of females to males. SSmall confirmed that the gender split is aligned to his historic experience at King Edwards VI School sixth form, and RBamford confirmed that it is aligned to the enrolment at WSC sixth form, which indicates it could be a local demographic anomaly, and is aligned to the JCQ’s national dataset for A Level providers. NBurgoyne confirmed that from his historic experience at Kesgrave High School sixth form, and working with other sixth forms, there does tend to be a greater proportion of females to males. RBamford agreed to provide additional information for the next meeting, split by provision type.

RBamford

LChapman left the meeting at 4.59pm

JRobson summarised the key metrics at OSFC in 2021/22 and noted that the Year 13 results were very high with 88.2% of all grades on target; and an ALPS report Grade3. JRobson noted that the vocational results have improved significantly compared to the last comparable year (2018-19) however are lower than last year’s wholly centre assessed grades.

The Committee commended the outstanding results and retention in what was an incredibly challenging year.

7.iv. 2020/21 Quality Improvement Plan

The Committee received and considered the reports provided.

DGartland summarised the progress against ASFC’s top ten priorities for last year and confirmed that additional commentary will be provided in the SAR.

The Committee commended the staff at ASFC for their great progress on these top ten priorities throughout an incredibly challenging year and pandemic.

DGartland

JRobson summarised the progress against the OSFC quality improvement plan for last year. JRobson confirmed that additional commentary will be provided in the SAR.

The Committee commended the staff at OSFC for their great progress on the quality improvement plan throughout an incredibly challenging year and pandemic.

JRobson

The Committee discussed the need to highlight the importance of teacher continuous professional development and teacher performance, as a fundamental element of quality assurance, should be included in the 2021/22 Quality Improvement Plans

AHurrell

across the Trust.

The Committee discussed the need to agree the same data metrics to fully understand trends in the data within the colleges and across the Trust to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion of student progress.

RBamford

8. Update on progress in 2021/22:

8.i. Curriculum

Committee members received and considered the progress reports provided.

SSmall summarised the ASFC report of Progress Review 1, which shows how the cohort is progressing and what support has been put in place to support students who are behind their progress targets.

The Committee queried whether the 18 students who are behind their progress targets are behind due to welfare or academic issues. SSmall answered that there is a correlation between the two but agreed to provide additional information in the next report.

SSmall

The Committee queried whether it is common for students to be behind their progress targets at this stage in the year. DGartland confirmed that there are a proportion of students who are behind at this stage, however we are seeing a slightly larger proportion this year due to students' prior attainment and skills, but this process is used to provide additional support to students.

LChapman re-joined the meeting at 5.24pm

AAdamson summarised the OSFC report and noted that the teaching staff have spent a lot of time on WeekONE to support induction of students to ensure they are on the right course at the right level and know how to access appropriate support. Students continue to engage with their subjects very well and are engaging with new projects and activities at pre-Covid levels.

The Committee queried if the small cohort sizes in modern foreign languages at ASFC is sustainable, and what the cause of this is. DGartland noted that nationally modern foreign language cohorts are very small, however we believe that it is important to maintain these courses to provide students with the breadth of course choice. JRobson noted that it is a similar trend at OSFC. The Committee discussed that it is difficult to achieve sizable A-Level cohorts, unless there is enthusiasm and uptake throughout schools. NSavvas noted that we are also working with our feeder schools to support study of modern foreign languages at secondary schools and student's progression routes but it will take 4 years to have an effect.

8.ii. Student Support inc. Induction

Committee members received and considered the progress report provided.

GChittock-Nash summarised the report and noted the structure and systems being implemented to support students and student voice across the Trust. GChittock-Nash noted that we are seeing a significant increase in welfare issues across the Trust and a small spike in behavioural issues at OSFC compared to pre-pandemic levels. GChittock-Nash and JRobson confirmed that this is being closely monitored and the Personal Progress Tutors are supporting students to resolve. The Committee asked to see further data on the current behavioural issues to understand whether there are any trends.

GChittock-Nash

GChittock-Nash outlined plans to run a pilot to support understanding on peer-on-peer sexual harassment. The Committee commended the proactive approach to safeguard against peer-on-peer sexual harassment and to strengthen reporting systems and student support.

9. Plans for 2021/22

9.i. Data and MI

Committee members received and considered the progress report provided and RBamford summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including reviewing the systems, processes, data metrics and alignment of reporting across the Group where applicable and appropriate, and sharing best practice to support efficiency and compliance across the data and examination administration teams.

The Committee commended this approach and the strengthening and aligning of KPIs.

9.ii. Quality Assurance

Committee members received and considered the progress report provided and AHurrell summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including reviewing and aligning the quality assurance platform, systems and processes for reporting across the Trust and the Group where applicable and appropriate, and sharing best practice across comparable programmes of study across the Group and amongst the quality teams and the Ofsted inspectors in the Group. We are also looking to align the templates and format for SARs, QIPs, quality reviews, stakeholder surveys, etc.

The Committee commended the rapid realignment of quality checks and mechanisms across the Trust.

9.iii. Quality Improvement and Professional Learning

Committee members received and considered the progress report provided and KSida-Nicholls summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including creating a Group-wide teacher CPD programme which is linked to appropriate research.

The Committee commended this approach and the thoroughness of the report and plans.

9.iv. Student Support

Committee members received and considered the progress report provided and GChittock-Nash summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including strengthening the safeguarding, pastoral and welfare teams' capacity and sharing best practice to support students across the Group.

9.v. EDI and Best Practice Sharing

Committee members received and considered the progress report provided and JRobson summarised the key areas for development in 2021/22, including creating additional best practice sharing groups, recontextualising the curriculum, further embedding British values, and using (and growing) our internal EDI champions and external EDI training to continue to promote, value and support EDI across the Group.

The Committee commended the rapid progress of the Executive to work as a Group to improve systems and processes, innovate and pilot programmes to proactively tackle societal issues, and to share best practice across the Group to continuously improve our provision for students.

10. Policies

10.i. SAT Early Career Teacher Policy

KSida-Nicholls to provide policy at the next meeting.

KSida-
Nicholls

11. Student Exclusion Report

GChittock-Nash to provide update report to the next meeting.

GChittock-
Nash

12. Any Other Business

No items.

