

**Priestley College – Quality and Standards Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 2 May 2024**

Meeting commenced with a Special Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (SLDD) experience from the Study Base. Mrs Ryan, the team and the students were thanked.

Present: Gerry Brennan, Sophie Gardiner, Amy Heald, Simon Jenkins, Ian Rigby, Carolyn Williams, Sheila Yates

In Attendance: James Gresty, George Contos, Carol Blinkhorn (Minutes)
Student representatives: Stanley Strong, Charlotte Glover

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Peter Kahn, Louisa Reeves and Bev Scott-Herron.

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of personal or pecuniary interest in the matters to be discussed were made.

3 Humanities and Social Science (HSS) Faculty Update:

- i. overall performance including actions for improvement**
- ii. curriculum development**

Mrs Holt, HSS Head of Faculty shared and took governors through a Faculty Update document and highlighted the following:

- 3 main curriculum areas - Social Sciences - Humanities (History, Politics and Classical Civilisation) - Geography, RS and Philosophy
- EPQ
- Additional responsibility - Skills

Social Sciences - Psychology and Sociology, both very big subjects.

Psychology - a priority improvement line. Mrs Holt has worked with Mr Contos, Mrs Graham and Curriculum Lead (CL) Mrs Flanagan who joined Priestley this year, a brilliant appointment, to focus on TLA strategies, improving high grades and consistency across classes and steps have been made towards improving this. The future plan is a specification change, to help consistency for students.

Sociology - large numbers of students and teaching groups. Fantastic results last year and building on this for this year. Positive comments from the Ofsted inspection. The future plan is a focus on developing the current 'Exam Help' booklets and retrieval practices.

Humanities

CL Mr Lister has done a fantastic job of bringing the team together. Across the curriculum area there are lots of intervention strategies, Easter revision sessions, Grade booster sessions and exam help. The team are very good at analysing results. They have looked at ways of sequencing units.

They motivate students, keep them engaged and do it well with trips and visits, guest speakers, links to careers and progression.

Geography, Philosophy and Religious Studies (RS)

Geography - a successful team last year. They look at coursework and maximise time spent with students. CL Mrs Bones is doing some work with other colleges exploring coursework delivery models.

Philosophy and RS - Philosophy is a close monitoring line this year. Strategies put in place here and also in RS to improve high grades. Philosophy has a new team member who has come from a 11-18 background and has brought some strategies with him which seem to work. Mr Muirhead has delivered the ROAR programme and hopes this helps with recruitment.

EPQ

Ms McCormack is the coordinator for this area and does a great job for a team with members from across the College. Early intervention strategies work well. They have utilised some of the GTA support to help with proofreading and referencing. Developed the artefact and performance EPQ. Early start programme success. Ms McCormack is working with our Oxbridge Coordinator to drum up interest for the early start programme for next year. For the future, the team are looking to explore ways of celebrating the success ie online brochure, informal gathering and are also piloting a number of different EPQ groups.

Skills

Mrs Holt works with Mrs White and Mrs Heald to have a coordinated approach to skills. Skills audit completed to gather student awareness. Skills icons, information and posters designed by our Design and Print team have been shared with teaching staff to enable relevant skills to be built into schemes of learning and teaching resources. Students use the Priestley Skills Builder to log skills achieved and Mrs Heald has coordinated student focus groups to analyse the awareness levels of the Priestley Skills Builder amongst the different cohorts. We have also been accepted onto the Skills Builder Accelerator Programme (SBAP).

Governors asked the following questions:

Mr Brennan - Last time you talked to us, staffing levels were a concern, where are we now? Mrs Holt reported a full teaching team with enough part time staff and we are building a timetable around this. Mrs Flanagan, CL in Psychology and Mr Muirhead in Philosophy and RS were appointed and are in post. We have a colleague going on maternity leave and are looking at Mr Helsby for maternity cover.

Mrs Yates - Why did Sociology and Health cohorts choose to visit Budapest? Mrs Holt stated they went to experience the different aspects of culture, they visited an orphanage and the visit covered a unit around families and households.

Mrs Yates - Some 80 students are taking Classical Civilisation, this is quite a good number, why do you think this is? Mrs Holt noted the team have held year 10 taster sessions together and this has made prospective learners aware of subjects they may have not considered.

Mrs Heald - It is not necessarily obvious to students what direct post-18 routes there are from the subjects in your area. What are their options? Mrs Holt reported she has had meetings with colleagues in our Careers and Employability Hub looking at ways of promoting career progress in Humanities and Social Sciences. Our Work Experience Coordinator has arranged for representatives from Papyrus to come in to do a myth busting session about career paths in June. This is a pilot event this year and if successful we may invite other organisations next year.

Mr Jenkins - EPQ, do students self select? Mrs Holt reported that there are a number of pathways, it may be an enrolment fourth choice, sometimes students come to us as EPQ would compliment their other A levels. For those in year 1 with a high average GCSE score, we may recommend they pick up EPQ after the May half term and then continue with this and 3 A levels into the next year. Also at course confirmation, if a particular subject doesn't work for a student, EPQ may be recommended.

Mr Brennan - Are we providing skills students need for employment? Mrs Heald confirmed the skills are based on what employers want. Mr Contos noted we have strong employer connections through the Employer Board and the development of the Green Baccalaureate.

Mr Brennan - In Psychology and Philosophy, how do we think the faculty is looking going into the exam season?

Mrs Holt responded looking at PM4, if compared to last year we might have a concern, as this year we are not looking as strong as last year. We have done quite a lot of work with staff to be more accurate and we think we are being more accurate. Some progress has been made in priority areas and we are hopeful for a positive impact.

(Mrs Holt left the meeting)

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 February 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Mr Brennan noted that under any other business he was expecting to receive a link to the PM3 report. **Mr Contos noted that the release of PM3 coincided with post mock QuIP meetings and agreed to check and circulate the report.**

5 Matters Arising

Action Log - June 2023

No	Description	Responsible	Completion
1	English and STEM - Faculty Update Audit of College software - Mr Gresty	Mr Gresty	

			Ongoing - for after the exam season
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6 Link Governor Update

- a) HSS - Link Governor Meeting - 22 February 2024 - governors received Mr Rigby’s report for information.

7 Student Progress Monitoring Update (Period 4)

Mr Contos took governors through the PM4 report and noted that new is section 3 - predicted grade by pathways.

Governors asked the following questions:

Mrs Gardiner - A Level ALPS - Why is it that both the predicted grade and ALPS scores are quite low? Mr Contos replied these are low because of the grades that have been inputted. Teachers are being cautious about their predictions. The Nick Allen Six Dimensions report uses in year data and we also use this to measure where courses are at against SFC benchmarks. We use a range of measures to understand progress and value added.

Mrs Gardiner - Is there any reputational risk for the College if the ALPS score is low? Mr Gresty responded it is an important measure that has some merit. It is useful to look at trends. Many do not use ALPS but it is one tool.

Mr Rigby - Effort Scores - trend is a dip across ‘number of reviews Effort Score 2’ in 23/24 compared to 22/23, could this be attributed to behaviour or attendance? Mr Gresty noted there is alignment between attendance and effort. We have had these conversations at every subject level.

Pathway Summary Predicted Grades - **Mr Contos to provide an explanation for reviews/results column ie what is it. Action: Mr Contos**

Mr Gresty noted this time last year we were overly positive with the student body. We are saying to staff that we need to be more accurate. There are so many variables and comparison is difficult as it is not exactly like for like. Mr Contos reported that he delivered a presentation to teaching staff on the importance of accuracy. It also included TLA strategies from the SFCA which Sarah Graham shared. This was well received and staff reacted positively.

Mrs Gardiner - Is there ongoing moderation? Mr Contos confirmed there was, where we have improvement lines we have gone external for advice. It is best to under promise and overdeliver.

Mr Brennan - What is the achieved grades column? Mr Contos reported this was the total number of passes.

Mrs Gardiner - What is a pass? At A level this is E and above, T Level is a Pass and Voc a Pass.

Mr Gresty suggested that we remind ourselves that our high grade rates are on a par with sixth form colleges. We are in a year of challenge and what we do now is key ie target C/B boundaries.

Attendance - Mr Contos reported a slight dip in attendance. Nationally there is a 1 in 5 persistent absence in schools and the college is not immune from this. The figure in green includes authorised absences.

Mrs Yates - What makes an absence authorised? Mr Contos reported communication from a parent.

Mr Strong - Is there any verification? Mr Contos noted that the teams on the desks are good at following up.

Mrs Heald - Does this include work experience? Mr Contos reported no, work experience is a positive count.

Mrs Yates - There have been quite a number of trips which is great in lots of ways but has this meant students are not having their regular teacher as much as we would like?

Mr Gresty reported we have taken a hard line on holidays and for trips and visits, we need fewer of them in term time. Staff days lost has had a knock on cover issues and admitted to asking that every lesson was covered. Mr Contos noted we are looking at the quality of cover and the cost.

Ms Williams - Do you look at attendance at the end of the year and compare? Mr Contos reported we share with all students the link between attendance and grades. The Nick Allen report also considers attendance. Mr Gresty reported for those who are disengaged, we link attendance to career aim.

Retention - Mr Contos noted this was positive and the College is very good at keeping students.

Mr Brennan - This report is excellent at telling us about all our students but it doesn't tell us how our priority lines are doing. **Mr Contos noted we can add a line to the report. Action: Mr Contos.**

8 Exams 2024

Mr Contos gave some context and updated governors on exams:

- Change of staff (loss of 2 experienced exams officers)
- New staff appointed
- Taken on board feedback from staff and invigilators around areas that needed improvement

To ensure the main summer series goes as smoothly as possible, the following has been put in place:

- Weekly catch up meetings with Exams Officer and MIS Manager
- Pre-Exam checklist being developed
- 'Liaising invigilator' confirmed to aid communication
- Agreed to book core number of invigilators for sessions to help planning
- Earlier start for invigilator team /booking of room to meet /and photocopying room

- Ms Olive supporting curriculum teams with student skills eg Word
- Shared timetable with IT team along with additional resource for am starts

Mr Contos noted there are a significant number of concessions which may require extra time, that space is an issue and that every vocational course has an exam, this was not always the case.

9 Any Other Business

In anticipation of the student representatives finishing college on 24 May, Mr Brennan expressed his thanks to Mr Strong and Ms Glover for their contributions to the Quality and Standards Committee and wished them well for the future.

10 Date and Time of the Next Meeting

Thursday 20 June 2024 at 4.30 pm

The meeting closed at 6.20 pm confirmed

Action Log - May 2024

No	Description	Responsible
1	PM3 Report Mr Contos noted that the release of PM3 coincided with post mock QuIP meetings and agreed to check and circulate the report.	Mr Contos
2	Pathway Summary Predicted Grades Mr Contos to provide an explanation for reviews/results column ie what is it.	Mr Contos
3	PM4 Report Mr Contos to add a line to the report around performance of priority lines.	Mr Contos

Action Log - June 2023

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1	English and STEM - Faculty Update Audit of College software - Mr Gresty	Mr Gresty	Ongoing - for after the exam season