



RICHMOND SCHOOL and SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Minutes of the Improvement Committee Meeting

held on Thursday 6th October at 4.30pm in the Head's Office

Present: Lesley Abbey (LA) *left at 5.50pm*, Peter Cradock (PC), Caroline Hall (CH), Judy Hooton (JH), Andy McCarthy – Chair of Committee (AM), Ian Robertson – Headteacher (IR), James Robson- Chair of Governors (JR)

In attendance for all or part of meeting: Scott Lunn (SL), Lesley Richardson – Deputy Headteacher (LR) Jenna Potter – Deputy Headteacher (JP), Lesley Sweeting – Clerk

(7 governors + 4)

Apologies: None

Item No	Minute	Action
IC1617:01	Election of Chair to the Committee It being the first meeting of the Improvement Committee it was AGREED UNANIMOUSLY that AM be appointed Chair with JH to take over as Chair whilst AM is abroad during the Spring Term.	
IC1617:02	Welcome and Apologies AM welcomed those present. There were no apologies and LA informed the meeting that she would have to leave early due to a 6pm appointment.	
IC1617:03	Declarations of Interest/Confidentiality LA declared a possible interest in Item 9 on the agenda regarding 2017/18 curriculum planning. In the event due to time constraints discussion of this item was deferred to the 3 rd November meeting. There were no items deemed confidential at this point.	
IC1617:04	Subject Presentation – Maths – Scott Lunn (SL) A written departmental report was circulated to governors prior to the meeting and SL highlighted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In summary Key Stage 5 obtained good overall scores with Further Maths being excellent. However there were two or three disappointments. A lot of work has been put into intervention and this was reasonably effective at Key Stage 5. • Key Stage 4 achieved an overall YELPS score of 5 but within this the number of pupils making expected progress (3 levels) was good at 71.8% (above national average) whilst those making better than expected (4 levels) was only 24.8% (below the national average of 30%). • The department believe more work is now being put in at Key Stage 3 but that it is taking time for improvement to show and that too much catch-up is currently required at Key Stage 4 – this makes the 4 levels of progress a headline concern. • The target of 72% for students in Maths attaining A to C grades was exceeded at 76.3% and most students were happy although some 	

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disappointment where a C was not sufficient for them to study their choice at 6th form which required a B.

- At Key Stage 3 the attainment of boys was raised but the overall score remained a 4, in line with expectations, rather than better.

GQ: Improvement appears to be linked to students increasingly being encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress and not always to be looking to the tutor – is there more to be done here?

Answer: Skilled teaching from front is needed to set pace and content but the leadership can promote a drive towards a growth mind-set with resources to back work up – websites etc. Some students are very good independent learners with a supportive home background and can be sign-posted to additional resources. Those with the attitude of 'tell me how to revise and I'll do it' need to be given clear guidance. Lots of targeted revision was done but this still needs to be increased.

- A lot of targeted revision was done but more still is needed.

What was the overall Key Stage 4 prediction?

Answer: It was predicted as a 3 at GCSE and was only a 5. Instinctively the staff felt they were basing predictions on assessment. Historically predictions have been more pessimistic but this year they were too optimistic. This year the predictions will be based on assessment just before the 'aiming high' points and this should give a more reliable figure.

GQ: The three levels of expected progress result is good and to be celebrated – but this should happen – the A - A do not look as good with only 16.5%.*

Answer: Some top groups scored very highly but amongst those with high targets there were some students with a considerable gap between target and attainment who were only aiming for a grade C.

- The ALPs scores for the 2 top groups show very good performance - a lot of the deficit is at Key Stage 4.
- The Key Stage 3 scores look good but there is the 'elephant in the room' of no external tests which measure well and so there is a danger that these figures may be exaggerated. The relative performance in the year group is pleasing but clearly the values ascribed to the year group are too high. Some groups' under-performance can be linked to staff absence. There has been some manipulation of sets so as not to penalise a particular group and this has affected the data, especially in Year 9 where it therefore gives a false impression.

Weaknesses:

- At Key Stage 4 historically value-added has had a positive correlation with the group's ability. However recently in the lower higher sets e.g. A2 and B2 there has been a dip in value-added which has affected the top grades and number making 4 levels of progress. These are able students but some are content with a grade C. Previously at GCSE there was a small cross-over between higher and foundation level Maths. A student not performing well might be moved from higher to foundation which had a sealing of Grade C. The new GCSE has a larger cross-over and you can get up to B on foundation level – this may help. Also the message to be put across to these students will be that B is needed for some 6th form courses so they need to aim for a 5 or 6 not just a 4.
- Professional predictions were too optimistic and this needs to be addressed with more use of real past papers at Key Stage 3 at end of Year 9 and Key Stage 4 and check that predicted grade matches this assessment.
- Value added from year to year shows a lack of consistency. There is an over

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reliance on staff who get really good scores across sets but this is needed from all staff and support, both formal and informal is being put in to achieve this.

- There needs to be a drive for 'growth mind-set' and independent study skills.
- If you take away the Further Maths score then the AS results are a concern and show a lack of consistency. Some students have struggled with the step up to Year 12 and staff will be encouraged to put in interventions earlier with the current cohort.
- Key Stage 3 scores were excellent but work needs to be done to ensure their validity and ensure a good transition to Year 10.

A new scheme of work has been introduced at Years 7 and 8. Year 9 curriculum is in its second year. Maths now has a full complement of staff but there is a longer term question regarding leadership time in the department which changes next September may address.

GQ: How did the re-sit Maths do?

Not well – they suffered from the timetable 3 took it at Christmas and the rest are having to do it in Year 13. This year it was timetabled from the start with 4 lessons a fortnight for Year 12 and a retake in November. Had success with one pupil who was ill in Year 10 and has now got a C after 8 or 9 attempts. One pupil also went up 6 marks to a C on re-mark.

GQ: You say the Year 7 curriculum has been revised. Are staff fully aware of the challenge of the Year 6 curriculum and able to build on it rather than re-visiting it?

Answer: It is not so much an issue as it may be in following years – the current Year 7 is not as far on in Maths as they are expected to be next year. Next year those pupils from the primaries not achieving national expectations will be required to re-sit at Christmas and a dry run is being carried out this Christmas with the current Year 7.

GQ: From a parental point of view Maths at secondary level can be difficult for them to understand – is there some input to enable them to help their child?

Answer: The school used to do a parent session on introduction to Year 7 Maths but the calendar was very full this autumn term. It might be possible to do something later in the year.

GQ: Could it be done for the whole Key Stage? To do it in Year 9 as preparation for GCSE might be helpful.

Answer: It could be done with individual PPEs at the end of the year.

GQ: Have you changed the Key Stage 3 assessments as well as the scheme of work?

The Year 9 assessments were challenging and we were pleased with them. We will need new assessments for Years 7 and 8 but they will be harder to calibrate with other cohorts.

GQ: What about within Pixel?

Answer: Comparison is difficult as different schools have different models – some schools start GCSE Maths in Year 9 and sit in Year 10 and then sit statistics in Year 11. We are not intending to do this.

GQ: What about the balance between summative and synoptic assessment – how does this reflect on development of retention of student knowledge over a period of time?

Answer: At Key Stage 3 at the end of each skill area there is a short, sharp mini-test and then at half-term point the whole section is tested – and student can use the Mathswatch clips and then re-take.

GQ: After some years of turmoil in Maths staffing is it OK now?

IC1617:04 continued	<p>Answer: The changes had a big effect on Key Stage 3 – not so great on Key Stage 4. The team we do have has real strengths and we should really be achieving a better score than 5.</p> <p><i>GQ: In the SEF there is variation in the teaching across the subject – how confident are you that this can be resolved?</i></p> <p>Answer: The school was fortunate to get long-term supply but we now have our own teachers and this should make a difference. We are doing well 4 weeks in to term and we can target Year 11 with a returning staff member in a couple of weeks giving some extra capacity for early interventions.</p>
<p><i>Governors thanked SL for his presentation and he left the meeting at 5.15pm</i></p>	
IC1617:05	<p>Analysis of Key Stage 5 Results – LR</p> <p>Main results documentation was made available to governors prior to the meeting. LR highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress and value-added in both year groups have improved and are above national averages. • AS results are above the national average with an ALPs of 3 in top 25% of schools nationally (although AS is being phased out soon). • The proportion of students gaining grade B or above has improved at A2 from 42% in 2015 to 45% in 2016 and at AS from 30% to 43%. BTEC has performed well with Distinctions increasing to 74%. • The average grade at AS has risen from a D+ to a C and at A2 from a C to C+. • The 92% A* to E pass rate at AS is likely to be above nationals but a little less than the aspirational 97% predicted. • Two subjects that were being closely monitored – Economics and Government & Politics have vastly improved which shows methods are working. The Extended Project has improved to ALPs 3 with a cohort of 10 so is being kept for now. <p><i>Governors were handed the subject ALPs information.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The in school variance at A Level is better than last year and is reducing but still not where we want it to be and there are still some issues. 11 subjects in 2016 performed well (red) as compared to 7 in 2015; only 5 subjects performed poorly (blue) as compared to 8 in 2015. • A-Level issues include Design and Technology which has performed less than well over three years. Ian Dawson is asking for a full cohort re-mark so there may be some improvement. Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Media Studies require improvement and also Health and Social Care (although a small cohort) to some degree. This will be addressed partly through 'raising achievement' meetings. • At AS level 11 subjects performed well (red) as compared to 6 in 2015. The numbers of students in the good subjects are larger whilst those subjects performing less well have smaller cohorts. • At AS there are issues with Media Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Latin and Classics which are being followed up. • It is disappointing that Richmond is not in the top 25% of

<p>IC1617:05 continued</p>	<p>schools for A2 although it is for AS. Solid results are needed for a couple of years.</p> <p><i>Gov. Comment: Regarding LR's role – in the previous two years the gap between predictions and actual results was massive but now under LR's leadership staff are more realistic, the gap is much less and it is clear where resources need to be focussed. There are clear signs of the leadership impact but there is still work to do.</i></p> <p><i>Answer: There is still work to do on associated data across the school.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: What support do you need from governors to keep the rate of progress going?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: There has been a big difference made by the Raising Achievement meetings and the support for staff.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: Do the staff get a 'two-pronged attack' e.g. JP and LR?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: Often it is done separately for Key Stage 4 and 5 but sometimes a joint meeting is needed – or we will take different subject areas as in the case of A level Biology and Chemistry.</i></p> <p><i>Staff Gov. Comment: There needs to be department time factored in to follow the Raising Achievement meeting with the Head of Department so that target-setting etc. can be done swiftly.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: Is there something being done for those pupils in the 'U' category in Biology and Chemistry at AS to get them out?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: Some students took 4 subjects at AS but have not continued with these subjects into A2. Nobody with a 'U' grade continued to A2 – sometimes they do so with an 'E' grade where they will get their 3 subjects for A2 and be timetabled for Year 1 of the subject in which they only got an 'E' As AS levels are phased out better advice and guidance towards the right A levels from the start will be needed.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: How would you assess the impact of student support?</i></p> <p><i>Peer-mentoring has been 1st class. Year 13 mentored Year 12 in specific subjects – we are broadening that this year. Academic mentors have helped with vulnerable students and those needing access arrangements, this last is a small cohort who are now achieving. Tighter tracking of attendance is also taking place. Last year attendance at lessons was tracked but not necessarily supervised study and this is being tightened up and better liaison with parents.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: What two things would make the biggest difference?</i></p> <p><i>Improving results in Biology and Chemistry – and making sure the able student cohort in Year 13 get A and A* grades.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: What would make the 6th form more attractive locally?</i></p> <p><i>Answer: We need solid strong results to be able to shout about them and then we can build in enrichment etc. Science results still effect community perceptions of the 6th form. We also need to make sure our current Year 11s want to stay with us and need to do some work re this. LAA added- We do offer a better sports option – which links with primaries – this adds value to the individual students' CV so that up against someone with the same grade it can make the difference of an offer at tertiary level.</i></p> <p><i>GQ: Have we a solid analysis of what our competitors offer?</i></p>	<p>SLT need to consider</p>
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IC1617:05 continued	Answer: Some of our students want a change – that is right for some. The student survey of those who stay with Richmond is very positive. Marketing strategy needs to be looked at.	
<i>LR left at 5.45pm</i>		
IC1617:06	<p>Analysis of Key Stage 4 Data – JP</p> <p>Main results documentation was made available to governors prior to the meeting. JP highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding Progress 8 there has been a change in the data nationally. The national average is represented by 0 – at the predicted +0.26 Richmond would be comfortable – initial analysis suggested it would be at +0.17. Maths was disappointing – sustaining YELPs 5 but only just. • More schools are now entering Ebac – we didn't hurry to do that - where score is based on double weighting for English and Maths plus 3 best Ebac subjects. Evidence suggests that every school has gone down but that our score will be +0.02 – which is only marginally above national average. Initial enquiry into data shows that we have too many children with gaps in the Ebac 'bucket'. This together with Maths not being as strong as we would want has knocked our scores. • A rapid and detailed analysis has been done of the gaps in this year's Year 11 (there are gaps because we have adopted a staged method of filling the Ebac 'bucket' – there are no gaps in Year 10 with the decision to enter pupils for triple science assisting). • The results are also affected by 6 specific pupils – 3 who were non-attenders, 1 boy who had a nervous breakdown and 2 who were on a bespoke part-time timetable – 3 of these were children with high prior attainment (it is estimated that in total these 6 pupils cost the school 0.12 – the results can be disaggregated to show this). 4 of these students effect the score of the disadvantaged cohort. <p><i>Governor Comment: It is useful for governors to know this and to have case studies.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The analysis of Progress 8 show students with Ebac slots filled. Applied Science students did very well but this doesn't count towards Ebac. Value-added is 1020 which is significantly good but the results are not good for the prescribed subjects for Progress 8. • Improvements in Drama and in Business Studies where the YELPs scores have risen from a 6 two years ago to a 2 in 2016. This occurs when lead teachers understand an improvement plan. • Computer Science is a very academically demanding subject and has improved significantly. • History, Art, Digital Photography, Dance and Health & Social Care have all improved. • Media, Graphics and Food Technology have achieved excellent results. • Sustained good results in English Language, Geography, French, German and ICT. 	

IC1617:06 continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maths is poor and has affected the overall Progress 8 score. • The Progress 8 figure for disadvantaged students is poor and could potentially be a 'cause for concern' but as mentioned previously case studies can be produced of the 4 students whose results skew this group. • English Literature is disappointing – some students saw it as an add-on to Language and the bottom 6 groups were particularly poor. In the current Year 11 Literature and Language are being taught simultaneously with a plan of PPEs and Mocks – Governors will be kept updated regarding the position with English Literature. Rebecca Weston – lead for English will be invited to speak to governors. <p><i>GQ: Are there Maths gaps that pass over into Science in the lower ability groups?</i></p> <p>Answer: In Science it is more to do with the culture and teaching themselves. The tendency has been to teach a topic and then test, then move on and therefore the knowledge is not cumulative – this is being addressed. Core science is now in a better position with controlled assessment this year. Staff are not yet fully confident but there is informal support available and two staff members in science may need more targeted support.</p>	Agenda SI 03/11/16
IC1617:07	<p>Closing the Gap and Pupil Premium Update</p> <p>The gap has widened slightly – largely due to the poor Maths result. English was outstanding for the disadvantaged cohort. Underpinning the under performance is persistent non-attendance on the part of some students. Persistent absence is being tracked – it becomes far worse in Year 8 where there is a 30% gap when compared with the non-disadvantaged cohort. By year 10 40% of the disadvantaged cohort are persistent absentees. This is a key area requiring work – results in this cohort cannot improve unless these pupils are in school.</p> <p><i>Gov.Comment: It is not yet clear that the data is triggering action – numbers need to reduce – it needs to be on the agenda at every meeting as to what has happened and what impact it has had.</i></p> <p>Staff are being much more draconian about work done out of school. Year by year and incrementally setting of homework is improving. The SLT are being insistent that staff set decent amounts of homework and so far the feedback is good.</p>	Agenda SI 03/11/16
IC1617:08	<p>Exit Interview Feedback – JR</p> <p>JR conducted 6 exit interviews at the end of term with staff and the responses were generally positive. There were some criticisms of the C system, C4s in particular, where some pupils didn't get the feeling that there is any follow-on sanction and viewed it as a 'bit of a game'. There is sanction after C4 but not all staff use it.</p> <p>There was some comment about 'flight path to outstanding' – has it stalled?</p> <p><i>GQ: What is underlining this?</i></p> <p>Answer: It is partly a gripe and partly a communication issue. Need to decide what pieces of communication to staff would be</p>	

IC1617:08 continued	most useful. E.g. 6 th form retention/recruitment targets and the financial drain on us if numbers are not achieved; and the need to make sure that our most outstanding pupils get support. (Note: positive comments which help the school move forward are helpful but gripes aren't particularly helpful).	
IC1617:09	Update on Music Peripatetic Staff A data sheet of the headline figures of the instrumental staffing as of Autumn 2016 was circulated to governors. This document celebrates the success of what Steven Boyd has done so far in embracing coming into the Richmond School family rather than NYCC. Shows developments to date including accessing pupil premium and other support.	
IC1617:10	Data from NYCC re Staff Turnover A sheet regarding this was circulated to governors. Governors were asked to note that, contrary to the view that is being voiced in some quarters that Richmond is losing a large number of staff, year on year in comparison with other schools Richmond's staff turnover is very low.	
The next meeting of the Improvement Committee is confirmed as Thursday 3rd November 2016 at 4.30pm		
<p><i>Note: The colour coding links to the three key roles of governance questioning; RED for 'setting strategic direction'; BLUE for 'holding headteacher to account for educational performance'; GREEN for 'ensuring financial health, probity and value for money'</i></p> <p><i>There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 6.25pm</i></p>		

