**ST MARY’S AND ST JOSEPH’S RC FEDERATION**

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE ST MARY’S STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE THAT TOOK PLACE AT 6PM ON THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2020 – PUBLIC VERSION**

Present: 6 governors; Brendan Finlow (Clerk)

Apologies: One governor was unable to log into the meeting.

In attendance: One governor.

**ITEM 1 – OPENING PRAYER**

1. A governor opened the meeting with a prayer.

**ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. A governor apologised for not being able to participate.

**ITEM 3 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

3. There were no declarations of interest.

**ITEM 4 – CENTRE-ASSESSED GRADES**

4. The headteacher briefed governors on the official results for summer 2020. This was a turbulent subject, with the background of the discredited government algorithm. Ultimately students received the higher either of their centre assessed grade or their standardised grade. He was content that the results submitted by St Mary’s were accurate and were unlikely to be adjusted. Many schools had submitted higher grades than they should have and possibly would have had their grades adjusted downwards. A number of St Mary’s grades were moderated upwards, notably English Literature, Science and History, plus one or two other subjects. None were moderated downwards as all schools received centre assessed grades or standardised whichever was higher.

5. The headteacher pointed out that the average total progress 8 score of .66 indicated that students got grades 2/3 better than expected. There would be no school performance/league tables this year. He reported that the majority of St Mary’s students were happy with the grades they had been awarded – to date he had received 4 queries and 4 access requests.

6. The appeal process was narrow. The only ground for appeal was if malpractice had taken place. The school complaints policy and procedure was to be followed in the case of any complaints. There had been only 1 request to sit an examination in November. The student concerned had been awarded a grade 5 but wanted a higher grade in the relevant subject. The deadline for requests to sit November exams, complaints or appeals was Thursday 17 September 2020.

7. A governor asked if any support would be provided for the student sitting the exam. Not officially, but help would be provided if requested. A governor noted that some schools did an internal algorithm whereas St Mary’s had not. The headteacher replied that he had anticipated the closure of schools and had undertaken an additional prediction. Teachers’ predictions were taken as they were based on first-hand knowledge of their students. A governor followed up by asking if there were any surprises for upwardly marked grades. The headteacher responded that some departments, eg English, were quite cautious in their gradings, as were Triple Science and History. A governor asked how often the school had been surprised by students getting better results that predicted. The headteacher replied that it did not often happen as St Mary’s had quite intense tracking and monitoring. A governor remarked that there appeared to be almost no grades 1, 2 or U. The headteacher said that in all key benchmarks St Mary’s had performed better than anticipated and students had exceeded FFT20 targets in many subjects, with only 2 subjects, RE and Physics falling below FFT20. Business Studies had come out above FFT20. This was unlikely to have happened if students had actually sat the examination. RE was predicted to get a middle 6 but got a low 6 on average.

8. A governor said that the school was to be commended on its rigorous approach to grading. The headteacher said that it was good to see students on results day. Many schools had emailed results out to their students. He was unsure what was likely to happen in 2021 and whether exams would take place or not. The timeframe for exams may change with exams starting in June rather than May to give a little more teaching time. There would also be a reduction in content in some subjects.

9. Comparing this year’s results with those of 2019, this year 59.2% students achieved grades 5 to 9 in English and Maths compared to 59.7% in 2019. Students achieving a positive overall progress 8 score was higher at 76.4% this year than the 68.1% achieved last year and students’ average total attainment 8 for this year was 57.02 as opposed to 54.98 for 2019. This year girls marginally outperformed FFT20 whereas boys significantly outperformed it. Prior attainment revealed this to be a good year academically.

10. A governor emphasised the importance the mock exam procedure. The headteacher stated that subject departments were currently finding out course content – it may be reduced to reflect lockdown. More robust mock exams will be run this year. A governor enquired if, in the circumstances, students may take the mock exams more seriously this year. The headteacher believed so and remarked that students appreciate that they have a great deal to learn to catch up with where they should be and less time in which to do it.

11. The headteacher said that more data could be emailed out to governors if required. The 2020 grades would not be used if a school was inspected.

12. A governor asked if the reduced work ethic that we have heard about was to do with lockdown or other factors. The headteacher said that it was hard to answer and the 2019/20 year 11 may have been a rogue year but they did not have a strong work ethic.

13. A governor asked if students were up to date or were there gaps and did they do sufficient work during lockdown. The headteacher was pleased with the overall level of work done by students during lockdown but inevitably there were many gaps whether caused by lack of facilities and equipment at home, inclination etc. A governor stated that the school’s online provision through the website was very good and were we planning to continue utilising this online platform. The headteacher replied that the school was contingency planning for year group bubbles to go into quarantine but he was not expecting the whole school to go into quarantine at the same time. At present teachers were under a great deal of pressure and had an increased workload. As they and not the students were moving around, they were using unfamiliar classrooms. A governor noted that we had several children out of school at present who were not expected to return several weeks, so the online platform was being used for them.

14. A governor wondered about the numbers of students who had chosen each option subject. A governor stated that all subjects had been taken up, apart from Food Technology for which there were insufficient students to enable a group. A governor said this could be looked at in more detail at the next meeting. **Action: Paul Shannon was to provide this information. Post-meeting note – figures are enclosed with these minutes.**

15. A governor offered congratulations from governors on the 2020 results to the headteacher and the school. She extended best wishes for the coming year.

**ITEM 5 – ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

16. The next meeting will take place 6pm on Monday 23 November 2020. Virtual or otherwise to be determined nearer to the time.

A governor closed the meeting with a prayer.

The meeting ended at 7pm.

Brendan Finlow

Bursar and Clerk to the Governing Body

September 2020

Certificate:

The above minutes are an accurate record of the meeting of the Standards and Curriculum Committee held on 10 September 2020.

Signed: ………………..… Chair November 2020

Enclosure:

1. Number of year 10 students taking option subjects.

Distribution:

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