**Preston’s College Special Quality and Standards Committee Meeting 30th November 2017**

**Present**

Ms L Hornsby (Chair)

Mr J Wilson

Mr M Driver

Mr J Lee

Ms P Davies

Ms A Markland

Mr T Readett (Part)

Mr J Boydell (Part)

Dr E H Smith

**In Attendance:**

Mrs M Haworth (Vice Principal Quality Teaching, Learning and Learning Support)

Mr M Noblett (Vice Curriculum, Curriculum Delivery and Planning)

Mr S Nixon (Executive Director Resources)

Ms J Crowther (Clerk to the Corporation)

Ms H Cross (FEA Governance Specialist)

**Apologies**

Mr M Collard

Mr S Browne

Mr R Boswell

**ITEM 1 Welcome and Apologies:** The Chair welcomed members and noted apologies.

**ITEM 2 Declarations of Interest.** No further declarations were made.

**ITEM 3 Minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2017:** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record

**ITEM 4 Corporate Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan:**

Mrs. Haworth confirmed that the draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2016-2017 has been produced and includes a summary of progress since the last Ofsted Inspection, key strengths and areas for improvement and a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), which informs the everyday work of the College in ensuring continuous improvement. Mrs. Haworth informed the committee that the QIP supersedes the Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) and that any outstanding actions have been incorporated. Mrs. Haworth requested that the Committee give consideration to the identified strengths and areas for improvement in ensuring that they give reasonable assurance to the Board of their accuracy and appropriateness. In summary, the following points were noted:

* Development of TLA which has contributed positively to learners outcomes
* Exemplary behaviour of learners
* Good employability and employer engagement in curriculum delivery
* Good enrichment provision and work related learning enhance learner achievement
* Good outcomes on study programmes and good improvements made to the quality of class based provision
* Two year improving data trends and are now above national averages

Areas for ongoing improvement:

* English and Maths high grade success
* Apprenticeships outcomes
* Attendance including  English and Maths sessions

The Chair raised a question as to whether or not the benchmarking analysis includes other local colleges to enable the College to see where they stood in relation. Mr Noblett confirmed that all colleges were in the analysis, but at this time it would not be possible to benchmark against individual colleges. However, he was able to confirm that the College currently ranks 254 out of 269 college in terms of average grades on entry for 16-19 study programme learners, but the outcomes in terms of achievement are in the top quartile which is very pleasing, and demonstrates value added. P20 of the SAR outlines the progress made in terms of English and maths and demonstrates that in terms of value added this is ‘plus 1’ and whilst there is still some work to do, this demonstrates solid improvement. In terms of Functional Skills, the College is 12% above national average. Again, there is further improvement required, but substantial progress is being made.

Members asked the student governors whether or not they found the environment one in which it was possible to learn. The feeling was that there was a lot of support from staff, but some learners were not as motivated as others and so ensuring that behaviour in class is positive ensures that learners can learn and achieve. Mr Noblett confirmed that since the last inspection a lot of work has been done in improving TLA, improving the behaviour in class and improving the learning environment, reinforced by a consistent approach to upholding classroom standards and expectations, ensuring that learners have the best opportunities to learn. The Principal noted that staff were working hard in promoting differentiation and taking an individual approach to learning and not ‘teaching to the middle’ and this is having an impact. Mrs Haworth confirmed that in the monitoring visit from Ofsted, inspectors noted that progress was being made in this area. She confirmed that the SAR and the QIP were shared with the inspector and she was able to give some assurance that it was fit for purpose. The Chair noted that the monitoring visit was key in giving inspectors assurance that progress has been made.

Mrs Haworth confirmed that there are still some areas that are underperforming, and these areas are being closely monitored. These areas are: Health – both 16-18 learners and Adult learners, Apprenticeship outcome, including the provision of English and maths in Apprenticeships and learner attendance. To address this, a Head of Apprenticeship provision has been appointed with additional remission included in the post to enable the post holder to have the time needed to make improvements. The Principal noted that pre-entry Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) had been improved from September to ensure that the right learners are on the right programme at the right level.

The Principal confirmed that attendance continues to be key focus. Improvement has been seen, but this is a continual challenge and issues arise across all areas of the college. A Student Manager for Adults and Apprentices has been put in place. Members expressed surprise that attendance for Adults might be a problem, and Mr Noblett confirmed that previously the emphasis had been on 16-19 learners and previously not enough emphasis had been placed on impacting on the adult cohort. Issues with Adults include problems with childcare, and also that staff are not always as robust in their challenge of Adult attendance as they might be with 16-19 learners. Mrs Haworth confirmed there are a variety of reasons why Adults don’t attend as Adults often have complicated lives. However, Mrs Haworth asked the Board to note that outcomes for Adults are high at 91% so the poor attendance does not necessarily have an adverse impact on achievement. The Principal confirmed that work was being undertaken to look at different modes of attendance and different methods of calculating attendance given many Adults continue to work at home. In the monitoring visit, attendance was better than in the previous inspection, and in instances where learners were not there, all staff knew where they were which is a positive step forward. Members asked if when apprentices fail to attend, if employers were notified. Mrs Haworth confirmed that work was being done to enable employers to access attendance rates for learners, but work is also being done to implement a telephone approach to letting employers know that learners have failed to attend. Work is also being done with employers to ensure they understand the importance of learner attendance, so they are not kept at work when they should be in college. The College also makes allowance for work patterns, for example, Hair and Beauty learners are not expected to attend in the run up to Christmas. This has worked well and supports both the learner and the employer.

In relation to Teaching, Learning & Assessment the college can evidence continuing improvement in working to ensure that the learner experience is improving across the whole college curriculum. It is important that every class is engaging, and learners want to attend. Strategies are in place for disengaged learners and all staff have received CPD in this area. The new approach to Learning Walks was introduced towards the end of 2016-2017 and all staff were observed against the new measures introduced. There is now an open-door policy in classrooms where anyone can walk in and observe at any time. This has made a significant difference to previous arrangements when staff only had one formal observation per year. This enables the Quality team to see that high standards are maintained all the time and not just for observation. The process is supportive, with clear guidelines. The Staff Governor confirmed that it was now clear with the expectations clearly outlined. Staff have taken the process on board well, and generally speaking are happy with it.

Delivery of English and maths is a continuing area for improvement. A significant number of learners enter the College without achieving English and maths. Work is ongoing in relation to the contextualisation of English and maths in technical areas, allowing learners to see how these subjects will impact on their future careers. More sharing of good practice, and peer to peer support has taken place and this has had a positive impact. This has allowed staff to try new things in a supportive environment. The Chair asked if there were particular feeder schools with low English and maths outcomes. Mrs Haworth confirmed that there were some schools where this is the case, and some schools who have good outcomes, and where learners have not attained they have not felt that they could give them any more and the learners have hit the ‘ceiling’ so there seems to be a perception is little more that they can do in school. However, when learners come to college there are often different motivators in terms of seeing a career pathway that can provide additional motivation. The Chair asked if the College has the opportunity to work with the Local Authority with failing schools, or schools of concern. Mrs Haworth confirmed that this is not in place at the moment but may be something to consider. Mrs Haworth confirmed that all learners undertake a maths and English assessment on entry, and that the outcomes are used to inform delivery throughout the year, meaning that there is ongoing development of English and Maths for all learners.

Mrs Haworth invited questions from the Board and drew attention to the Quality Improvement Plan and the provisional grades awarded.

Mr Noblett noted that in relation to grading, the grades reflect the previous academic year.

**Leadership and Management** - Good

**Outcomes for learners -** Good for 16-18 Classroom Based Learning and Adults, whilst a Requires Improvement grade has been awarded for Apprenticeships. Overall, taking into account weighting of provision, this would be Good overall.

**Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) –** At this stage, based on last year’s performance, Requires Improvement. This will be reviewed at the mid-year point.

**Personal development, Behaviour and Welfare (PDBW) –** Good

The opinion of the Board was sought with regard to the overall grading.

The Chair asked if TLA would be a limiting grade for Ofsted. The Principal confirmed that whilst in the Common Inspection Framework there are no limiting grades, there are no colleges graded Good without a Good for TLA.

The Chair asked what would be put in place for a mid-year review. Mrs Haworth confirmed that a full round of learning walks would be completed by January. The first term of 17/18 has been about improvement, CPD and support for staff. This has been put in place and the January learning walks will assess the impact. At the moment, it looks like an improving picture. Performance management is now also in place to support improvement.

Members noted the improvements that have been made, and that these are clear to see. The Principal confirmed that there is another monitoring visit from Ofsted due in the Spring, and that should give assurance that the improvements are continuing. She reminded members that the SAR is retrospective, and much of the improvement will continue through 17/18. Members asked if the process was reiterated in February would this be taken into account by Ofsted. Mrs Haworth confirmed that milestones will be measured at this point so that performance can be monitored and a clear view of the impact of the improvements can be taken.

The Principal pointed out the significant improvement of achievement rates and confirmed that this would be triangulated with the value-added and observations. In the previous inspection, 95% of observations were good or above, but achievement was low. The College has improved its approach to triangulating evidence rather than just relying on observation grades.

**The proposed grades were agreed to be recommended to the Board for approval.**

The Chair suggested that the overall grade be accompanied by a narrative because it was generally accepted that the college is on the cusp between Good and Requires Improvement. She agreed that a revised view should be taken in February.

**Date and time of next meeting – Thursday 1st March 2018 at 5.30pm**