

MINUTES OF THE RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Monday 16th September 2024 at 5.30pm
The Redwood Suite, Richard Huish College

Present: College Governing Body Members:

Barbara Barratt (Chair) – BB
Dave Tomaney (Vice Chair) – DT
Anna Gabriel – AG (*Attending via Teams*)
Richard Hatcher – RH
Richard Wood - RW
David Snell – DS
Johanna Marks – JM
Ian Brown – IB
Dickson Yiu – DY

Senior Leadership Team:

Emma Fielding – Principal
Laurie Morgan – Director of Quality
Becky Flower – Vice Principal: Student Experience
Matt Nolan – Director of Student Support and Safeguarding Lead – *present for agenda item 4.1*

Clerk:

Hannah Clunie

Apologies: Hannah Curtis, Jacob Peacock, Andrew Phillips

Not present: N/A

In attendance: Lisa Webber (*Head teacher, Pyrland School*), Helen Wells (*Trust Governance Specialist*)

Items marked with * had a paper previously circulated.

Item marked with + was a verbal update and/or presentation.

SECTION 1 – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Welcome and apologies

The clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Hannah Curtis, Jacob Peacock and Andrew Phillips.

Lisa Webber, Head teacher at Pyrland School and Helen Wells, Trust Governance Specialist were attending as observers.

- **Chair/VC Approval**

Governors approved Barbara Barratt and Dave Tomaney as Chair and Vice Chair for the academic year.

1.2 Declarations of interest – business and pecuniary

There were no declarations of interest made in connection with items on the agenda.

1.3 Minutes of previous CGB meeting held on Monday 8th July 2024*

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Electronically signed by the Chair.

1.4 Matters arising report*

Governors noted the report.

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC REPORTS

2.1 Start of Year Update

- Summer results* – Director of Quality

Governors noted the report.

Governors passed on their congratulations to the College for the excellent results, which were the highest on record for some considerable time.

The A level results were higher than those achieved in 2023, with an increase in higher grades. The College value the progress that students make. There had been a steady increase across the entire A-level provision (0.01 in 2019 to 0.16 in 2024). The College are listed as being in the top 20% of providers in the Country. Governors commented that this was a great headline to use when advertising the College. The Director of Quality commented that it was pleasing to see the positive progress made from students with high prior attaining grades and students from a low-income background.

Q: What percentage of A-level results are from Sixth Form Colleges?

A: There are 200+ College's nationally, 92 of those are Sixth Forms but this doesn't include Sixth Forms in schools. Six Dimensions compares us to other Sixth Forms only and approximately 70% of A Level results are in the ALPS database, with both programmes giving the College different data.

A governor questioned the Free College Meals (FCM) students' data. The principal advised that they are a smaller cohort (141). There continues to be a combination of challenges monitoring this cohort over the course of the year, including variety of different ways of categorising and late data published to us by DfE, well after the start of the academic year. The College had previously tried to put these students under one 'Huish Plus' bracket but it hadn't worked well. This is an area the College will revisit this academic year.

A governor raised the possibility of looking at where these students came from prior to attending the College, to look at the data and progress made and later the value added. It could also be helpful to have the knowledge of how we could support students coming from certain schools.

ACTION DIRECTOR OF QUALITY/PRINCIPAL

A governor commented that the results for Maths stand out as an excellent improvement on the previous year. The Principal and Director of Quality were currently meeting with Course Managers to discuss what went well and what could be improved, this would be discussed further with the Quality Committee.

A governor on the Quality Committee commented that for reassurance, all of the subjects discussed in the committee last year had made significant improvements which was positive to see.

A governor mentioned that it was previously discussed that History was looking to consider changing exam providers and given the result would this still be the case. The principal advised that they would be meeting with the History course manager to discuss this. Given that the grades were positive, it's likely they will remain with the same exam board.

The principal advised there was a similar issue with an English Literature paper. One paper was a cause for concern, but this was already being looked into.

A governor questioned the previous and continued low uptake of some subjects (Music/German). Was there a higher uptake this year and was it viable to continue offering these subjects?

The principal advised that there were 19 students on roll for German, Modern Foreign Languages uptake was higher. Some students had come from further afield such as Tiverton and Uffculme. Music uptake was also higher. The College continue to be the only state provider for music and feel it's important we try to continue this. The subjects with very small cohorts are taught on reduced staff timetables and the Senior Leadership Team are mindful of the impact this has for staff and their workload who teach a much larger cohort of students. Where staff have consistently large classes across their teaching groups individual arrangements are made to support and mitigate additional workload.

The principal advised there was still some work to do around Extended Certificates (students on both A level and Vocational pathways). The principal has met with the Assistant Principal of Humanities and Social Sciences, Martin Wren, and are looking how to manage this going forwards.

Governors questioned if there were any changes predicted with the change in Government. The principal advised that Labour government had promised they would pause and review for 1 year, however this is now not the case, and we are in an even more uncertain position with regard to T Levels. We are currently navigating this in preparation for the College open event scheduled for October. This is including creating pathways from subjects that we would be able to offer. The Senior Leadership Team are working closely with Vocational Staff to discuss all potential possibilities for students.

Two new members of staff had been appointed for the Extended Diploma in Business Studies, there was still some work to be done in this subject, but staff were working together to overcome this.

A governor commented on the positive results for Level 2 Maths and English, all governors agreed that it was encouraging to see students achieving good grades in core subjects.

- Staffing update*

Governors noted the report.

The principal advised there had been approximately 20 new members of staff join the team, which was largely due to the growth of the College.

It had been a turbulent start in a few subject areas due to the unexpected loss of two full time members of staff to illness, this has been managed well and the College has teaching well covered with strong subject expertise.

Q: Has there been mentoring for the new staff?

A: Yes, this has gone well. New staff met their mentors over breakfast. It was very positive, staff were made to feel welcome. Wellbeing leads have done a great job.

David Snell left the meeting at 7pm.

A governor questioned whether there were any staff vacancies. The principal advised that there were some vacancies for January which the College were already advertising for. The principal was bracing for a potential struggle to recruit in IT.

- Student numbers* – *Vice Principal of Student Support*

Governors noted the report.

There were currently 2198 students on roll. The target was 2200. The college felt they had much more accurate data this year. It continued to be challenging to predict as some students wait until receiving their GCSE results to accept their place.

Transport continues to be an issue for some students coming from further afield. The College were creating a more bespoke strategy with certain schools for the coming year. The school liaison team were working hard.

Level 2 students were performing well, and it was encouraging that they were remaining at the College upon gaining their qualifications. Local sport and Oak House were bringing students from out of County and overseas. It remained a challenge to gather information from students who withdraw from the College and the reasons behind it, it was often the case that it's for a variety of reasons rather than just one. It was noted that the College had a higher number of students with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and disadvantaged students this year, which was a small increase on last year.

Governors would be kept up to date throughout the year. The College would have a clearer picture of retention in October.

2.2 Quality Update – Appraisals* – *Director of Quality*

Governors noted the report.

Full appraisals for staff were due to take place in October, which was a different process to what has been undertaken before. The College were also in the process of scheduling a benchmarking activity with colleagues from the Heart of Mercia Trust who would be visiting the College later in the year.

Governors commented that it was an exciting development, and the timing of the appraisals appeared to be working well.

A governor commented on the excellent presentation of the quality wheel and that it helped considerably with supporting governor understanding.

The Director of Quality advised that as this had worked so well, other 'wheels' were being created in different areas of the College. The Director of Quality advised that governors would be updated regularly.

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

3.1 Whole College Priorities*

Governors noted the report.

3 priorities had been set for the College.

- Effective Assessment
- Student Oracy
- Sustainability

The principal advised that this would be reported on regularly at meetings.

SECTION 4 – SAFEGUARDING AND HEALTH & SAFETY – *Matt Nolan, Director of Student Support and Safeguarding Lead*

(This item was brought forwards to the start of the agenda)

4.1 Safeguarding Update* - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)

Governors noted the report.

The Director of Student Support talked through minor changes to KCSiE this year, noting that larger changes were anticipated for next year. There was more training in place for staff this year with the College striving to remain consistent with their support to all students. All staff at Huish are trained to Recognise, Refer, Record and Reflect. The College are proactive in using radios across the College and are able to respond to any incidents with immediate effect.

Governors were informed that there was new guidance around protecting Special Educational Needs (SEN) children. This included:

- The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, the College continued to carry out monitoring checks termly. The College were also aware of Artificial Intelligence and the impact this could have.
- Protection from maltreatment to include at College, home and online.
- Do not need consent to share personal information if a child is at risk

Ian Brown, Safeguarding governor, talked to governors about the ongoing challenges the College face and the resources that are required to continue to support students.

A governor questioned the Online Safety Policy, and the list aimed at parents/carers and what they are required to do. Was this determined by the College or an external body and how does the College communicate with parents?

A: The Policy was determined by a mixture of the College and external information, it's not possible for the College to check or monitor what parents are doing at home. The College regularly communicates with parents by sending information, including sharing information of outside agencies who would be able to offer support. The College converse with parents when required to give guidance and support.

Q: There is a noticeable increase in things being flagged through filtering and monitoring (35%), is this because filtering is more effective or are incidents increasing?

A: This was likely because we have changed the filtering system and adjusted the parameters.

A governor commented on family issues being the 2nd highest reported concern amongst students, was this becoming more common? Governors were advised that family and bereavement tended to fluctuate and there was no particular pattern.

Anxiety was a lot more prevalent in the Autumn term (35%), predominantly due to the transition phase into College.

A governor questioned who attends the reflection meetings? Designated Safeguarding Leads, The Vice Principal of Student Support and the Safeguarding Governor (Ian Brown). Minutes are taken at these meetings. Over the course of the year there were plans for various other Sixth Forms to visit and it was discussed to consider inviting another Sixth Form to attend one of these meetings to gain an outside perspective.

Governors requested being updated again on the Prevent Action Plan later in the year. It was agreed an update would be included in April.

ACTION DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARDING/PRINCIPAL

Matt Nolan left the meeting at 18.10pm

4.2 Health and Safety Update* – Director of Quality

Governors noted the report.

The Director of Quality advised that there were changes on how the College monitor health and safety. A new health and safety administrator had now joined the committee.

A full health and safety inspection had been carried out with one high risk action remaining, this work was ongoing and had an allowed longer response time.

A governor questioned the response time/end date. The work required a significant level of construction work underneath the stage which was not being used at the moment. The College anticipate the work would take approximately two months to complete.

Governors noted that the report demonstrates there has been a significant amount of work carried out and that good progress had been made with a clear reporting structure.

Updates have been made to the storage and monitoring of risk assessments, Roger Neale and Richard Anderson have moved risk assessments onto Smartlog and risk assessments have been created where there previously wasn't one. The Health and Safety Committee and Site Manager have worked hard to ensure processes are in place across the College and that all staff are involved in ensuring this remains consistent.

A governor questioned if this includes potential risks, the principal advised that the Site Manager is very proactive and keeps on top of potential risks that could arise.

Governors noted that a lot of work appears to have been undertaken in a collaborative way and wished to pass on their thanks to everyone involved for all of the hard work that has gone into this.

SECTION 5 – GOVERNANCE

5.1 Policy Cycle and Policies for Approval*

Serious Breaches of Behaviour Policy – Approved

Trips Policy – Electronically Approved

Online Safety Policy – Approved

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy - Approved

The following policies were noted by governors: Charging and Remissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Health and Safety Statement of Intent, RHT Minibus and Vehicle Policy.

5.2 CGB Development Review Preparation*

Governors to complete the form and return to clerk by 30th September. To discuss further at strategy afternoon in November.

5.3 Governance Update*

Governors noted the report.

It was agreed that the Clerk would begin the process to elect a staff governor.

ACTION Clerk

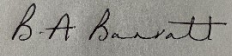
SECTION 6 – OTHER MATTERS

- Governors were reminded of the Sixth Form College Association (SFCA) webinars and that they may find some of them useful.
- The principal advised that the Destinations report would be shared at next College Governing Body meeting.

Governors passed their thanks onto the entire College team for their hard work over the last 12 months.

Meeting end 7.40pm.

These minutes were approved by the College Governing Body and electronically signed by the Chair on Monday 9th December 2024.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "B.A. Bennett".