

MINUTES OF THE RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Monday 9th December 2024 at 5.30pm
The Redwood Suite, Richard Huish College

Present: **College Governing Body Members:**
Barbara Barratt (Chair)
Dave Tomaney (Vice Chair)
Anna Gabriel – Community Governor
Richard Hatcher – Parent Governor
David Snell – Community Governor
Johanna Marks – Community Governor
Ian Brown – Community Governor
Hannah Curtis – Staff Governor
Dickson Yiu – Associate Governor, Student

Senior Leadership Team:
Laurie Morgan – Director of Quality
Becky Flower – Vice Principal: Student Experience

Clerk:
Hannah Clunie

Apologies: Emma Fielding, Andrew Phillips, Richard Wood, Jacob Peacock

Not present: N/A

In attendance: N/A

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 Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies accepted from Emma Fielding, Andrew Phillips, Richard Wood and Jacob Peacock. The meeting was quorate.

1.2 Declarations of Interest

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

1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting Monday 16th September 2024*

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

1.4 Matters arising report*

Governors noted the report.

- Disadvantaged student monitoring – scheduled for February meeting
- Complaints review – ongoing
- Staff governor position had received no responses
- Destinations report – Scheduled for February meeting

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC REPORTS

2.1 Headline Data

Governors noted the report.

- **Attendance**

Attendance overall for the College was 92% in November, which was 1% higher than the same time last year. Staff and tutors continued to work hard monitoring this.

- **Retention**

Lower Sixth appeared to be settling well into the College. Governors commented that the report was positive. The Director of Quality advised that Management Information Systems (MIS) were looking into why certain data wasn't correlating, such as reasons for students leaving. This data would be shared with governors in due course.

A governor questioned the gender splits and whether it was similar to last year?

The Director of Quality advised that there was a slightly larger female cohort this year.

A governor questioned any challenges the College had faced with students wishing to leave or change courses.

The Director of Quality advised that a lot of processes had been tightened up and students who wished to do so had successfully changed onto alternative programmes. The College was looking at patterns across the year and types of students that are leaving. So far, it indicates students with lower GCSE profiles were leaving, the College want to ensure that it is clear why students are leaving and whether there are specific cohorts that would benefit from more support with their transition into College.

- **Year 2 Mocks and Target Grades**

Mock week took place in November, this was the first time it had been undertaken in Year 2. It was successful in giving students an authentic exam experience, students had responded well. The data was currently being processed and would be shared with governors at the February meeting.

A governor questioned whether students were anxious to sit the mock exams?

The Director of Quality and Vice Principal of Student Experience advised that conversations had taken place with the Student Executive who advised that it had gone well and had been a positive experience. Overall, students had coped well with the mock exams, although there was still some work to be done around the consistency of information from each subject.

Staff governor advised that mocks had been held previously at this time but were held within the classroom. It had been beneficial for students to sit their exam under exam conditions. The staff governor also felt it was beneficial having all students sit the mock exam at the same time.

A governor questioned whether students would hit their target grade at this point in the year due to the differentiation in courses, the Director of Quality advised that this was communicated with students prior to sitting the mock exam.

2.2 Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan Update*

Governors noted the report.

Governors commented that the SAR was factual and in line with what was discussed at the September and November governor meetings.

A governor commented on BTEC and extended certificate and whether there were still expected potential challenges around these qualifications?

The Director of Quality advised that there have not been questions around the suitability of the courses, however there was still work to be done. Due to the nature of assessments in these subjects it can feel like a 'break in the week' for a student as they may not have to push themselves as hard, the College were looking at Huish 30 and how this could be supported for these courses. The College are aware of where the issues are and are working to refocus the vocational strategy.

A governor questioned Huish30 consistency between subjects as the benchmarking report did not reflect this. The Director of Quality advised that the report was written prior to the external benchmarking visit. Staff are confident that students are able to advise and articulate what Huish 30 is, however, the external benchmarking highlighted some areas where it may be lacking. The College were already aware of these subjects.

A governor commented that if the benchmarking visit hadn't taken place, would this have been picked up?

The Director of Quality advised that the external benchmarking was a useful way for the College to ensure, in line with QIP priority for assessment, that they are keeping this to the highest standard and ensuring that it is impactful. It was noted that there were inconsistencies around the quality of Huish 30 and not the students overall understanding. There continued to be challenges around making it impactful for different courses and different cohorts. This has been discussed with staff and staff have been open to feedback.

Governor commented on looking at student independence and how this can impact Huish30 depending on what they are studying.

A governor questioned the Gatsby benchmarking and being non-compliant. It was agreed this was to be changed in the report as this was not applicable for the College. The College does meet the appropriate Gatsby benchmark.

The chair thanked the College for the thorough report.

QIP update

Governors noted the report.

- Oracy – There had been positive comments from external visitors and feedback from students. The Director of Quality stated that students could clearly articulate the reasons why oracy was beneficial for their learning and development.

Q: How are students who struggle with oracy supported?

A: This was a focus for next term, a survey has been sent out to students and this will be analysed and shared with governors.

- Effective Assessment – Governors were advised there would be more feedback following a scheduled CPD day in January. The college had reintroduced the November Mocks.

A governor asked a student governor for any comments or feedback regarding the grades and what they were likely to achieve. The student governor commented that it varied with each subject and some grade boundaries were higher than others, however they felt like it had given an accurate representation of where they were currently at in their studies.

A governor questioned the voice 21 benchmark.

The Director of Quality advised that this was a framework of which you could classify different aspects of oracy. Lis Sheridan was taking the lead for this and would be able to attend later in the academic year and share feedback with the governors.

ACTION Director of Quality to share voice 21 benchmarking with governors.

A governor questioned the value of external benchmarking and whether the College found it beneficial.

The Director of Quality and Vice Principal have taken part in various benchmarking visits. Its beneficial for the College to see things from an alternative and external perspective and to build a network of colleagues across the Sixth Form sector.

2.3 External Benchmarking Visit Update*

Governors noted the report.

Governors commented that the report was positive, and it was encouraging to see the ethos of the College throughout the report.

The governing body wished to pass on their congratulations to the College.

It was discussed that the College have found it challenging to pin down exactly what they want to measure in terms of retention, the Director of Quality was looking at this alongside MIS.

A governor asked how staff had felt about the external visit. A staff governor advised that staff had taken it on board and had enjoyed interacting with external colleagues.

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC AND COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW

3.1 Safeguarding Update*+

Governors noted the report.

Ian Brown, Safeguarding Governor, talked governors through the report and the processes regularly followed and undertaken as safeguarding governor.

Some key points were:

- Students had attended some interviews for recruiting new staff. Students have strongly contributed with some questions raised by students now formally used in the interview process.
- Barbara would be attending the next safeguarding meeting with Ian Brown and Matt Nolan.
- There had been discussions to consider adjusting training for existing staff members to keep it fresh and less repetitive.
- Mental health continued to be a cause for concern amongst students and was increasing year on year.
- Change in protocols for football. The Trust were now following FA protocols instead of Huish protocols. There continued to be a significant workload for the safeguarding team and checking volunteers' suitability.

A governor questioned following the incident in Oak House whether there had been a reflective opportunity for staff members involved.

The Vice Principal advised that staff followed formal procedures accurately and carefully and are fully supported.

Governors raised that Matt Nolan, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Becky Flower, Vice Principal, were still on call for Oak House. Governors felt that this should be further discussed at another time as this continued to be an added pressure on staff members and their workload.

Governors were encouraged to complete the termly safeguarding quiz.

3.2 SEND Review+

Governors in agreement for Heart of Mercia recommendation, Lisa Appleton, to carry out the external review of SEND. This was largely due to having more knowledge of the post-16 sector. Clerk to contact and arrange for review.

ACTION CLERK

3.3 Quality Committee Feedback*

Governors noted the report.

SECTION 4 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

4.1 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Monday 25th November 2024*

Governors noted the minutes.

SECTION 5 – GOVERNANCE

5.1 Student Governor Role / Scheme of Delegated Authority Update (SoDA)*

Governors felt strongly that students being a part of the College Governing Body (CGB), and their contribution was invaluable. All governors were in agreement that students should remain a part of the CGB and although they would not be able to formally vote, would still like students to be able to advise and give their views on voting matters.

Student governor requested title to change to Associate governor – (student). Governors in agreement with the change.

Governors approve of the changes to the SoDA pending the above name change.

5.2 Residential Lead Governor*

Governors noted the report.

Governors were in agreement of the residential lead governor role to be relinquished.

Vice Principal, Becky Flower, wished to thank Barbara on behalf of all staff at Oak House for her unwavering support over the years.

5.3 Governance Update*

Governors noted the report.

- **APPROVED:** Richard Hatcher to transfer to community governor pending Trust Board approval.
- Whizz tickets available to purchase, this would be taking place at the College on 4th-7th February 2025.
- Carol service at Taunton Minster church on 18th December.

SECTION 6 – OTHER MATTERS

6.1 Any Other Business

- Note change of date for January CGB - Monday 24th February 2025.

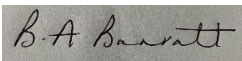
Closed session – Confidential

No staff or student governors present.

It was agreed by the College Governing Body that this item would remain confidential.

Meeting end 19.30pm

These minutes were approved by the College Governing Body on Monday 24th February 2025 and electronically signed by the Chair.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B.A. Barrett".