

MINUTES OF THE RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Monday 24th February 2025 at 5.30pm
The Redwood Suite, Richard Huish College

Present: **College Governing Body Members:**
Barbara Barratt (Chair) – Community Governor
Anna Gabriel – Community Governor
David Snell – Community Governor
Johanna Marks – Community Governor
Richard Wood – Community Governor
Richard Hatcher – Community Governor
Ian Brown – Community Governor
Hannah Curtis – Staff Governor
Tom Torjussen – Staff Governor
Jacob Peacock – Associate Governor, Student

Senior Leadership Team:
Emma Fielding - Principal
Laurie Morgan – Director of Quality
Matt Nolan – Director of Student Support and Safeguarding Lead
Richard Jones – Careers, Exams and Learning Centre Manager
Martin Wren - Assistant Principal: Humanities and Social Sciences

Clerk:
Hannah Clunie

Apologies: Dave Tomaney, Andrew Phillips, Dickson Yiu, Becky Flower.

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 Dave Tomaney, Andrew Phillips, Becky Flower and Dickson Yiu. 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 previous meeting 9th December 2024*

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. The chair consented for electronic signature.

1.4 Matters arising*

Governors noted the report.

- Tom Torjussen, ratified by the Richard Huish Trust Governance and People Committee on 29th January 2025. Tom Torjussen approved by governors to join the governing body.

- Complaints – Governors were advised that further discussions around complaints were scheduled for the Quality Committee, this was largely due to the confidential element that arises when dealing with complaints. Governors discussed the difference between formal and informal complaints and the varying ways in which the College deal with them. Governors were confident that the College was handling complaints appropriately and in line with policies and procedures.

A governor questioned whether it would be possible to have a yearly or quarterly overview of complaints. It was advised that this was already given annually to the College Governing Body (CGB) and governors would continue to be informed of formal complaints in line with Trust Policy.

- The Chair congratulated the College on their 'Wizz' production.
- The Chair advised that the previous CGB's closed session was in hand and being dealt with.
- Governors in agreement that remaining matters arising were items on the agenda or scheduled for future meetings.

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC REPORTS

2.1 Destinations Reports / HESA Data*

Governors noted the report.

Slight increase in number of students going to university which was encouraging as there was a decline nationally. The College is stricter on defining 'gap year', with students only being able to select this option if they had a deferred placement.

A governor asked if there was a way of definitely knowing if these students have started university after their gap year?

Governors were advised it was difficult to know for definite, however students who have deferred their placement prior to their gap year do tend to join University, but a portion of those that apply during their gap year don't.

Governors requested the possibility of including further breakdowns within the results.

ACTION RICHARD JONES

A governor questioned whether there were any surprises within the data. Discussed that, generally, students from Richard Huish stay within the Southwest of the Country for University with fewer choosing to go further afield. The College is still trying to broaden trips and experiences for students geographically to potentially broaden their future choices.

A governor commented on the outstanding HESA results (pages 10 and 11 of the report) and discussed ways the College could publicly celebrate this. The College has been discussing a social media campaign and was looking at meeting with an outside agency to promote the College in the right way and in line with the College values. Governors were keen to support this and feel that the College's results should be celebrated and shared with the wider community. Governors requested an update later in the year.

ACTION PRINCIPAL

Careers day had taken place at the College which was well received by students. 'Careerfest' would be taking place on 26th June 2025, all governors were encouraged to attend.

A governor questioned the vocational students and the categories of careers/occupations they were heading into and what the College do to support this. The College is trying to encourage work-related opportunities for students to increase their occupation knowledge. The College was continuing to create links with local businesses which in turn is generating interest and broadening the experience for students.

The governing body thanked Richard Jones and his team for their report and the work that goes into supporting students.

Richard Jones left the meeting.

2.2 Vocational Reform Update*

Governors noted the report.

Martin Wren talked governors through the current picture expected to be implemented with regards to the extended diploma qualifications and T Levels. The College would be implementing 'pathways' to link together certificate sized Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQ's) with equivalent pathways. Governors were shown examples of pathways that would be available to students.

A governor questioned how many teachers' students would be taught by on their individual pathway and how these teachers would work together to support the students and their learning.

Governors were advised there would be an assessment 'map' of the AAQ's available to staff to ensure that work would not be overlapping between courses. The College is mindful that it is going to be challenging for students and staff and that there are risks involved, however there are also a lot of exciting new opportunities. The College is aware that students are going to need strong pastoral support.

2.3 Headline data*

Governors noted the reports.

Attendance/Retention/Leavers

- Retention was in line with where the College was at the same time last year.
- Overall attendance has increased in comparison to the previous 2 years.

A governor questioned how the College interprets the accuracy of the attendance data.

The pastoral group are regularly checking on individual student data and identifying any trends. Staff are able to easily identify students with low attendance and provide support where necessary.

The Director of Quality advised that further information from the system developers would be shared with the CGB at a later date which would provide a further breakdown of the data.

ACTION DIRECTOR OF QUALITY

Progress

The Director of Quality talked governors through the data.

A governor questioned whether there are mid-year reviews with course managers. Governors were advised that course teams were in the process of reviewing their Quality Improvement Plans (QIP's), governors were reassured that meetings were scheduled with course managers where necessary and any cause for concern was discussed with the Quality Committee.

Governors thanked the Director of Quality for the thorough report.

2.4 Admissions*

Governors noted the report.

Independent Schools Open Event due to take place in April.

The Principal advised there was a slight decline in applications for the extended diploma, however other A Level subjects were continuing to receive high levels of applications.

A governor questioned whether the data of students with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), children looked after, and exam concessions was in line with last year.

Governors were advised that it was clear this level of need was increasing, the College has made changes to some processes in light of this and will continue to support and adapt where possible.

RESOLVED Admissions Policy approved via electronic resolution pending proposed changes.

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC AND COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW

3.1 Disadvantaged Student Monitoring and School Transition*

Governors noted the report.

The College is looking to pilot a programme following a meeting with a College in Brighton (BHASVIC) to support students via a mentoring programme.

A governor questioned how many students would be taking part in the trial. So far there were 6 students taking part.

A governor asked a student governor whether they feel this would be beneficial for students. Student governor advised that he knows of students who would have benefitted from this when they started at College and that having a friendly face to talk to in a confidential and safe environment would be hugely positive.

A governor commented that it would be beneficial for staff/pupil relationships and that this would reflect positively on Huish values and priorities.

A governor raised that senior staff being in the role could impact how students feel about opening up and that this could be something to factor in, as students are aware of who senior staff are within the College and may doubt what they can and cannot say.

A governor questioned whether staff would be employed for this role or if it would be available to current staff. Governors were advised that it would be available to staff and there were resources available with regards to training and support if they were interested in the role.

Martin Wren left the meeting.

3.2 Health and Safety Report*

Governors noted the report.

The Health and Safety inspection had been postponed to March, the report would be shared with governors in April.

ACTION DIRECTOR OF QUALITY

Governors commented that it was positive to see the progress that has been made.

SECTION 4 – GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance Update*

Governors noted the report.

Governors were encouraged to contact the Clerk with regards to becoming a mentor/buddy to new governors joining the CGB.

4.2 Safeguarding Update*

Governors noted the report.

Ian Brown, Safeguarding Governor, talked governors through the autumn term report. The main points were;

- Referral increase from 2022 to 2024
- Higher percentage of male students seeking help
- First year of SEND data being provided
- Top 3 referral categories remain consistent with previous years
- Continued low levels of sexual abuse / child on child abuse
- Mixed programme students a cause for concern

Governors discussed the need for further resources and staff. Governors were advised that the mental health team were now tracking GCSE entry score levels to monitor whether this was having a negative impact on students and their mental health.

SECTION 5 – OTHER MATTERS

- Trips Policy had been circulated for electronic approval.
- The Principal advised the College had won the regional mooting competition and were now in the final which was taking place in March.
- DfE performance tables had been released, the College was ranked number 11 out of over 200 Sixth Forms. Governors congratulated the College on the brilliant result.

Meeting end 19.37pm.