

MINUTES OF THE RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Monday 22nd September 2025 at 5.30pm
The Redwood Suite, Richard Huish College

Present: **College Governing Body Members:**
Barbara Barratt - Chair
Anna Gabriel – Community Governor
Ian Brown – Community Governor
Johanna Marks – Community Governor
David Snell – Community Governor
Andrew Phillips – Parent Governor
Michael Wilson – Parent Governor (*attending via MS Teams*)
Tom Torjussen – Staff Governor
Hannah Curtis – Staff Governor
May Bloor-Gould - Associate Governor (Student)
Ella Culshaw – Associate Governor (Student)

Senior Leadership Team:
Emma Fielding – Principal
Laurie Morgan – Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality
Matt Nolan - Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Lead
Mel Winsbrow – College Services Manager

Clerk:
Hannah Clunie

Apologies: Richard Wood, Richard Hatcher, Becky Flower.

Not present:

In attendance: John Abbott, Richard Huish Trust Chief Executive Officer

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 Richard Wood, Richard Hatcher and Becky Flower, Vice Principal (Student Experience).

1.2 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Following correspondence received from the Chair which was circulated with the governing body via email, the decision to appoint a Chair and Vice Chair was being deferred to December when the current Chair's term of office ends. All governors in favour of Barbara Barratt remaining Chair until the end of her term of office.

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 meeting held on Monday 7th July 2025*

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

Signed: Richard Hatcher

Date: 12th January 2026

These minutes were approved by the College Governing Body on 12th January 2026.

1.4 Matters arising*

Governors noted the report and agreed that items were on the agenda or scheduled for future agendas.

1.5 Summer Results*

Governors noted the report.

The College Governing Body congratulated all staff at Richard Huish College for their hugely successful summer results.

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality advised that the College were now an ALPs grade 2. For context, governors were reminded that ALPs is a national A Level provider score system and approximately 70% of A Level results make up its database and it is therefore a good tool to monitor and track progress.

The key points discussed were:

- Free School Meals outperformed overall student body which was positive. Progress had been made across low-income students, with also high and low prior attainers still making progress. There was no gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students but there remained a slight gap between male and female students (ALPS 3 compared to ALPS 2), whilst the gap isn't significant, it is still something the College wish to explore further.
- The Vocational cohort performed well which was an indication that the vocational strategy over the last three years has had an impact. Similarly to A Level, there was a slight gender and disadvantaged student gap which the College would be investigating further.
- Extended Diploma programmes made consistent progress in comparison to last year. There was a more distinct gender gap recorded in the Six Dimensions data, and this was something the College would be looking into.

Governors discussed that the Level 2 cohort had been larger last year. A governor questioned what would be the largest numbers of students the College could accommodate?

The anticipated numbers are usually around 130, the college would struggle to accommodate many more than this as the site capacity is limited. Students have been getting better results in November which reduces the GCSE English and Maths class sizes from mid-January onwards.

A governor commented that the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) results were extraordinary and asked if as a result, the College would be running the course the same way again this year.

The Principal advised that there were no planned changes to the course.

Governors discussed that during the learning walks on the Strategy Day in November 2024, those that attended the EPQ classes commented on the upbeat and exciting

feeling within the classroom, was there anything that had helped the College understand the impact of this qualification?

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Quality advised that verbal feedback from students had been strong, with students commenting that it has helped with their confidence including with their university choices etc, but that there hasn't been any more analysis yet. Discussed that this would be interesting to do in the future.

A governor questioned whether there had been any feedback from staff who taught the EPQ.

The Principal advised that the EPQ structure taught here was likely different to other College's, largely because the member of staff who teaches the course specialises in EPQ, which has made a substantial difference.

A governor questioned whether staff have had the opportunity to reflect on the hard work that has gone into the College, what staff have learnt during the process and how this could be built upon in the future.

The Principal advised that the College has been on a significant cultural journey and this has been one of the reasons for setting up the Centre for Practitioner Development. The College aim to give staff the encouragement and opportunity to try and push themselves further. The College is also in a strong position with monitoring systems and better data collection, the College continue be informed by the data rather than led by it, including researching and understanding what the data could mean. The Principal praised staff for their high level of reflection and professionalism and commented that staff are confident to reflect on their results.

SECTION 2 – STRATEGIC AND COMPLIANCE OVERVIEW

2.1 Safeguarding Update*

Governors noted the report.

Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Lead, Matt Nolan, talked governors through the report and highlighted the importance of safeguarding and what this means at the College.

A governor questioned if the level of safeguarding reports made during the last academic year was in line with other colleges of a similar size.

The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Lead advised that the College don't have the data to say for definite but would assume it is a similar picture. The College use a triaging system for reports, with all reports dealt with individually and staff are aware of the importance that all reports are recorded.

Governors discussed the increase in resources available to students which came into effect last year and how this continues to be of the utmost importance. The Principal advised that the College continue to monitor this closely with the safeguarding team.

- KCSIE*

Governors noted the report.

The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Lead advised that there were no significant changes this year, advised governors that it is likely there would be some major changes next year.

- Summer Term Safeguarding Link Governor Report*

Governors noted the report.

A governor questioned if the Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DSL's) across the Trust meet to discuss any updates.

The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Lead advised that DSL's meet regularly with Richard Huish Trust Chief People Officer, Steve Chattell. Governors were advised that there had been some discussions with DSL's to make some slight changes to the safeguarding document throughout the year to modify and update governors each term.

A governor asked Associate Governors if they feel they can approach staff with any concerns or safeguarding issues.

An Associate Governor comment that all students are made aware of safeguarding and the importance of reporting any concerns. The safeguarding team introduced themselves to all new students during the 'Welcome to Huish' days. Student Executives promote the use of wellbeing QR codes to students, which an accessible online tool and can be used as another way to report concerns for students who may not feel comfortable speaking or raising concerns in person.

Governors wished to thank the safeguarding team for all the work they continue to do to support students.

The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Lead left the meeting.

2.2 Health and Safety Update*

Governors noted the report.

College Services Manager, Mel Winsbrow, advised governors that there was now a health and safety termly plan in place for the academic year to ensure that processes are effectively joined up and checks are being carried out when necessary.

2.3 Policies Cycle*

Governors noted the report.

Policies for Approval*

Richard Huish College Accessibility Plan and Policy

A governor commented on the need for an explicit statement at the beginning of the policy so that students know what they can access.

ACTION PRINCIPAL

Richard Huish College Artificial Intelligence Policy

A governor commented on the possibility of seeing some examples of how subjects are teaching the use of AI to their students.

ACTION PRINCIPAL – FUTURE AGENDA ITEM

Governors discussed the use of AI within the College and the approved AI tools. Governors were advised that staff complete an AI request form which is then checked by the Data Protection Officer prior to use. Students were also expected to complete a declaration form stated in the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy in order to use AI.

A staff governor commented that staff teams were discussing the use of AI within students work, including the ways in which the use of AI is acceptable and not.

Governors discussed the age restrictions in place, with well known AI tools not allowing under 18's. The Principal advised that parental consent is required for under 18's which is a logistical challenge. As the Trust subscribe to Microsoft 365, staff have been encouraged to use Copilot as it has an added layer of data protection. The College are hoping to be able to give students access to Copilot in the near future.

Governors discussed keeping the policy open to evolving as a live policy as it changes so quickly.

Richard Huish College Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

ACTION PRINCIPAL/CLERK CIRCULATE ELECTRONICALLY

Richard Huish College Online Safety Policy

Richard Huish College Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Richard Huish College External Visits Policy

Approved: the above policies were approved by the College Governing Body pending the proposed changes.

College Services Manager, Mel Winsbrow left the meeting.

2.4 New Format Self-Assessment Review (SAR) & Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Update*

Governors noted the report.

The Principal will update governors further at the Strategy Afternoon in November.

2.5 Whole College Priorities 2025-26*

Governors noted the report.

The three priorities are:

- Effective Assessment
- Inclusion
- Artificial Intelligence

Governors discussed the importance of inclusion, especially in light of the increase in ethnic diversity at the College and that there were some gaps in the data regarding English as an Additional Language. The Principal advised that there will be further reports on this to governors in the future.

Governors discussed the importance of the College being aware of this and the impact this can have on students and ensuring that all students feel welcome and part of the College community. The Principal advised that there were groups actively supporting this at the College with planned listening projects and events scheduled to take place.

2.6 Strategic Plan Update*

Governors noted the report.

The Principal advised that the current Strategic Plan comes to an end in December 2025. Following a visit to Shrewsbury in the summer, the Senior Leadership Team reflected that whilst we agreed it is important to have a strategic plan, the current format of the document wasn't working. As a result, a new structure is being drafted, and this will be shared with governors for feedback at the strategy afternoon.

SECTION 3 – ACADEMIC REPORTS

3.1 Start of Year Update*

Governors noted the report.

- Student numbers

As of the 11th September there were 2242 students on roll.

The Principal advised that a few students had left due to varying reasons, there had also been an issue with the bus service which has been resolved.

A governor questioned the anticipated dip in future student numbers and if there has been a noticeable uptake of students from the private sector.

The Principal advised that there was not a significant increase in students from the private sector.

Whilst there is an anticipated dip of student numbers in 2026, this isn't expected to be significant. The College is at full capacity in terms of social and study space and the priority at the moment is monitoring the ongoing situation regarding curriculum reform and how this could look for the College moving forwards.

The Principal advised governors that the College continued to work closely with the marketing team to ensure the College is advertising effectively.

- Staffing update

Governors noted the report.

3.2 Staff Survey

Governors noted the report.

Governors discussed the low turnover of staff and the wide range of opportunities available to staff, which would hopefully continue to generate external links and encourage relationships with other colleagues from other establishments.

A staff governor commented that 5 newly appointed staff members have worked here previously, which says a lot about the culture of the College.

A governor commented on the low uptake of the staff survey. The Principal advised that she has spoken with the staff voice and different unions and discussed that people can be nervous to fill it in, even though it is anonymous and staff were reassured of this.

The Principal advised that some amendments were made to the survey following previous suggestions from staff. The Principal advised that staff have other opportunities to raise concerns, such as Staff Voice, and have conversations and that this could be a reason for the low uptake.

A governor asked when the survey is sent out to staff.

The Principal advised that the survey is sent out during the summer term. Governors discussed the possibility of changing this to sharing with departments to complete during meetings as this could increase uptake.

SECTION 4 – GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance Update*

Governors noted the report.

SECTION 5 – OTHER MATTERS

5.1 Any Other Business

None to report.

Date of next meeting: Strategy Afternoon Friday 14th November 2025 11.00 – 4.30pm

Meeting end 19.32pm.

Signed: Richard Hatcher

Date: 12th January 2026

These minutes were approved by the College Governing Body on 12th January 2026.