



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ESHER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE ACADEMY TRUSTEES

Wednesday, 20TH September 2023 at 6.00pm

Present:

Tim Oliver (Chair)

Claire Douglas

Dan Hards

John Thater

Fran Stewart

Sophie Cook

Natasha Meade

Liz Gilroy-Scott

Anna Mawson

Jane Duscherer

Emma O'Brien

Terry Price (Member)

David Irving (Member)

David Lavarack (Member)

Sagar Patel, Deputy Principal, (Advising Officer)

Kate Parsons, Assistant Principal, (Advising Officer)

Catherine Davies (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Paul Collyer, Andy McVeigh, Mark Nelligan, Ross Robinson, Carl Egginton and Stephanie Fudge.

2. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the new Staff Trustees, Anna Mawson, and Emma O'Brien, to their first meeting.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Clerk, Sharon Kelly, for her work as the returning officer for the Staff Trustee election.

3. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of business interests.

4. PRESENTATION ON EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Deputy Principal briefed the Board on the examination results for 2023.

- The 2022-23 academic year saw results return to the 2019 grade distribution.
- The College continued to outperform National JCQ benchmarks especially for high grades. The College High grade % was above the 2019 result.

- It's difficult to make comparisons between the BTEC results from 2023 and 2019 but 14 out of 17 courses achieved a pass rate of 100% and a high-grade rate of over 70% was achieved in 3 Diplomas.
- The College results for students who re-sat GCSE examinations in Maths and English are significantly above the Association of Colleges 2019 national benchmark.
- Value added is difficult to calculate this year because the students who took exams in 2023 had Teacher Assessed Grades for their GCSEs and schools used difference criteria to allocate those grades. The DfE's L3VA measure of performance will not be published this year but the College has received the ALPS value T Level score of 3 for 2023. The value has been calculated using a client benchmark as the base and put the College in the top 25% of students making progress from their starting point nationally.

A Trustee asked the Deputy Principal to comment on which subjects had performed well and which had performed badly against the 2019 results. The Deputy Principal replied that he has collated data from the MIS and is looking to spot trends and share best practice with colleagues. There will be a focus on the subjects that have performed below the 2019 results and JCQ averages; leaders of the subjects that have performed well will have an opportunity to present to their colleagues and share how the grades were achieved.

A Trustee asked the Deputy Principal for more information concerning the students who will need to re-sit their Maths and English GCSE's again to attain a Grade 4. The Deputy Principal replied that students who enrol at the College with a Grade 1 or 2 in Maths take the Functional Maths qualification and then move onto the GCSE. A Staff Trustee added that students are given support to enable them to pass the Functional Maths qualification and the confidence gained helps when they re-sit the Maths GCSE.

5. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE PRESENTATION

The Assistant Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (Kate Parsons) briefed the Board on the latest statutory changes and current safeguarding activity at the College.

- The structure of the safeguarding team was outlined.
- The procedure to record an expression of concern, how it is managed and categorized was explained followed by an update on record keeping and information sharing.
- There was an update on the responsibilities of the College related to filtering and monitoring online safety.
- The PREVENT strategy was outlined and the counter terrorism local profile for Surrey noted.

A Trustee asked if a nil-return form was used to ensure the files of newly enrolled students were received from all feeder schools and the Assistant Principal replied that it was.

A Member asked if support staff can report a concern and the Assistant Principal replied that any member of staff has access to the reporting system and parents and members of the public can email their concerns to the safeguarding email address too.

ACTION: Assistant Principal to circulate the Safeguarding training to all Trustees and Members for completion by mid-October.

6. CONSTITUTION

6.1 Confirmation of the Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Clerk took the chair of the meeting.

The Board unanimously voted to re-appoint Tim Oliver as Chair of the Board.

Confirmation of the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees

The Board unanimously voted to re-appoint Paul Collyer as Vice-Chair, noting that his term as a Trustee ends in December 2024 so this will be his last year in this role.

ACTION: The Chair asked the external Trustees to consider taking on the Vice Chair role during the next 12 months to ensure there is a handover period.

6.2 Vacancy for External Trustee

The Chair thanked Fran Stewart for the huge contribution she has made during her 10 years of service to the Board. Her high level of engagement particularly with the self-assessment reviews was praised.

The Chair noted that the Parent Trustee, Jane Duscherer, will be put forward to the Members for appointment as an external trustee when her parent term ends in November.

6.3 Confirmation of Committee Memberships and Review of Committee Terms of Reference

The Board approved the list of committee membership and chairs, circulated prior to the meeting.

The Board approved the Terms of Reference for the Audit, Finance and Estates, Quality and Standards and Strategy and Policy committees.

6.4 Scheme of Delegation

The Board approved the Scheme of Delegation.

6.5 Review of Standing Orders

The Board approved the Standing Orders.

6.6 Career Progression Link Trustee

The Board noted that Jane Duscherer has accepted this role and the Terms of Reference for Career Progression Link Trustee are being drawn up by the SLT and will be reviewed by the Strategy and Policy Committee in November.

7. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Board approved the minutes of the Board of Trustee meeting of 12 July 2023.

8. MATTERS ARISING

The actions from the last meeting have all been completed apart from the list of upcoming calendar events which will be circulated soon.

9. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

9.1 Enrolment 2023

The Principal reminded the Board that it is 1 year since the Ofsted inspection and the Outstanding outcome which gave the College (along with strong IT Security and excellent outcomes this summer) a strong platform and ambition to further improve the outcomes for students and the progression of their personal development. The SLT are focusing on 3 key aims of the Strategic Plan to help achieve these outcomes. The Principal invited the Trustees to visit the College and see the estate and improvements made to access and security including new gates. Attracting the best staff to join the College will also continue to be a priority.

Enrolment of students starting in September 2023 has been very strong despite the return to 2019 grading for GCSES's which meant not all applicants met the criteria to enrol at the College. The GCSE hotline on GCSE results day gave clarification to the applicants on whether they would be able to enrol at the College. Enrolment was largely consistent with previous years in terms of take up by students with the target number of 1176 slightly exceeded. The reserve list was accessed to reach the enrolment number and a 5% drop out rate is used to predict the number of students present for the annual enumeration day in November.

Regarding Industrial Action, the situation is improving and whilst acceptance of the STRB report on pay by the Government does not include post 16-19 education there has been confirmation that additional funding will be received to account for teacher pay rises. In the coming weeks it's expected that an agreement between the NJC and Government will be achieved, and a retrospective pay award can be made to teaching staff. Due to the move to a new payroll provider in November 2023 the College is working with other S7 Colleges to ensure the pay awards can be made efficiently. Unison has outlined the pay demands for support staff and there is an ongoing review of the support staff pay spine.

Finally, the Principal outlined the concern of the SFCA at the rate of change regarding T Levels and BTECS. The SFCA predicts that by 2026 155,000 students could be left without a suitable study programme due to the planned reduction of AAQ's and slow growth of T Levels. The College is continuing to support the SFCA's campaign to protect student choice and network with other local Sixth Form Colleges to ensure a co-ordinated approach to Level 3 Reform.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance for circulating the results of a survey confirming no use of RAAC at the College.

ACTION: Clerk to circulate SFCA Protect Student Choice Report to Board.

9.2 Quality Improvement Plan

The Deputy Principal briefed the Board on the Quality Improvement Plan.

Target 1: Has been achieved.

Targets 9 and 10: Not Achieved. The Deputy Principal explained that the targets for A Level Pass rates and high grades were not achieved although only just missed. The Board discussed whether the targets should be adjusted, and the Deputy Principal said he would consider the feedback.

9.3 New Staff

The Principal gave an overview of the new staff who have joined the College and the changes to the Senior Leadership team.

10. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Assistant Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (Kate Parsons) briefed the Board on changes to the Safeguarding Policy especially regarding Online Safety.

The Board approved the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2023.

11. TRUSTEE'S SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Chair gave an overview of the Trustee Self-Assessment Report reflecting the Outstanding Ofsted outcome, changes to the make-up of the SLT and excellent outcomes for students this Summer. The Chair commented on the addition of the new Trustees to the Board and the ambition of the board to be dynamic and keep moving the College forward whilst also being aware of the challenges ahead such as the changing demographic and Level 3 reform.

The Clerk confirmed that the Skills Audit will take place in the new year.

A Member commented on the importance of succession planning and ensuring trustees are engaged in their roles.

The Board approved the Trustee's Self-Assessment Report

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A Trustee commented that he had been unable find an update of the exam results on the College website and the Principal replied that the marketing team had updated the website with a story on results day but he would ensure it was given more prominence in future.

13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING : Wednesday 6th December 2023.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Attendance was 65%

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

AT1-001	Assistant Principal to circulate the Safeguarding training to all Trustees and Members for completion by mid October.
AT1-002	The Chair asked the external Trustees to consider taking on the Vice Chair role during the next 12 months to ensure there is a handover period.
AT1-003	Clerk to circulate SFCA Protect Student Choice report to Board. (Done)

SUMMARY OF TRUSTEE CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Minute	Topic
S	2	The Chair thanked the Deputy Clerk, Sharon Kelly, for her work as the returning officer for the Staff Trustee election.
S	9	The Chair thanked the Director of Finance for circulating the results of a survey confirming no use of RAAC at the College.
S	6	The Chair thanked Fran Stewart for the huge contribution she has made during her 10 years of service to the Board. Her high level of engagement particularly with the self-assessment reviews was praised.
C	9	The Deputy Principal explained that the targets for A Level Pass rates and high grades were not achieved although only just missed. The Board discussed whether the targets should be adjusted and the Deputy Principal said he would consider the feedback.