



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

Wednesday, 26 March 2025 at 6.00pm

Present:

Tim Oliver (Chair)
 Dan Hards
 Emma O'Brien
 Daniela Rivas
 Liz Gilroy-Scott
 Mark Nelligan
 Natasha Meade
 Tom Clark

John Thater (Vice Chair)
 Alex Cronje
 Claire Douglas
 Sophie Cook
 Mark Aulds
 Dave Roberts
 Jane Duscherer

David Irving (Member), Terry Price (Member), Paul Collyer (Member), David Lavarack (Member),
 Sagar Patel, Deputy Principal, (Advising Officer)
 Anna Young, Director of Progression Guidance
 Oliver Schuster, Guest
 Catherine Davies (Clerk)

1. PRESENTATION ON PROGRESSION GUIDANCE WITH ANNA YOUNG, DIRECTOR OF PROGRESSION GUIDANCE

The Director of Progression Guidance gave an overview of the journey of a student through the Department starting with the importance of selecting the right courses at the point of enrolment. An introduction to the destination platform (Unifrog), higher education events and fairs and careers interviews ensure a student has access to resources and support during their first year. The focus at the start of 6.2 is on submitting their UCAS application and then moving to post offer support in the Spring Term.

This year the Department processed 896 UCAS applications and in 2024 86% of students progressed to their first-choice university which is above the national average of 82%. The exceptional progress made by students at university is reflected in the HESA data.

The Progression Guidance Department is proud of the high attendance numbers at events including the Higher Education Fair that hosted 80 universities. There are 2 Level 6 qualified careers advisors in the Department and the priority is to increase the number of careers interviews offered to students to ensure Gatsby Benchmark 8 is met (Personal Guidance). Another priority reflected in the new Gatsby Benchmark 4 (Linking Curriculum learning to careers) is to integrate curriculum and careers, for example a sustainability careers session with the Biology Department. The Department is working towards the Quality in Careers Standard 2026.

A Trustee congratulated the Director on the excellent Higher Education event for parents that he recently attended, and another Trustee added he had visited the Higher Education Fair and asked the Director for an overview of how the alumni network feeds back to the Department with

their experiences in Higher Education. The Director replied that the recent careers event with the Modern Foreign Languages department included input from 2 students who had recently graduated and going forward the alumni network is being used to gather information regarding transition to Higher Education and the challenges students face.

A Trustee asked for more details concerning keeping in contact with students who do not proceed to higher education and the Director replied the College kept in contact with about 93% of the cohort last year.

A Trustee congratulated the College on the recent Oxbridge offers received and asked what more can be done to support students with the application process and the Director replied that going forward the Director of Teaching and Learning is focusing on supporting students who take Oxbridge admissions tests.

A Member asked for more information regarding the support provided by Surrey Careers Hub and the Director gave an overview of the support provided to the Department and the Link Trustee for Careers Progression by the Hub.

The Chair thanked the Director of Progression Guidance for her interesting and informative presentation.

Anna Young left the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mark Aulds (Parent Trustee) declared an interest as the Link Trustee for Health & Safety at Esher Church of England High School.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Trustee were present.

4. CONSTITUTION

4.1 Appointment of External Trustee

The Chair welcomed Oliver Schuster to the Board, he will be appointed by the Members shortly.

4.2 Committee Membership and Chairs

The Board approved Tom Clark as Chair of the Audit Committee and thanked him for taking on this role.

5. MINUTES OF THE ACADEMY TRUST MEETING HELD ON 4TH DECEMBER 2024

The Board approved the minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting of 4th December 2024.

6. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Chair thanked the Principal for his written report. The Principal updated the Board with a verbal overview including:

- The funding rate for 2025/26 is 3.78% which is a real-terms funding increase of 0.13%. A grant will be received in September to contribute towards the National Insurance increase from April with details due to be published in May.
- A DfE Curriculum and Assessment Review report is due in September 2025 and will shape provision from September 2027 onwards, but no major surprises are expected.
- The new Ofsted Inspection Framework using a multi-graded “report card” system is due to be implemented nationally from November 2025.
- The Classroom Block is two weeks behind schedule and expected to be ready by mid-July.
- Teacher and Support staff pay awards were agreed and back pay from 1st September 2024 together with the pay rise are being made in the March payroll.
- Regarding staffing, the departure of a Senior IT Technician has led to 2 technicians being recruited to the IT Department. The retirement of the Bursary Officer has coincided with the implementation next academic year of a new bursary platform called Pay My Student which will be administrated by the new Bursary and Attendance Officer.
- The Learning Support Department has been renamed as Additional Learning Needs and Jorja Bullock has been appointed as Director of Additional Learning Needs to oversee the development of this area with provision for Quality First Teaching, Access Arrangements and EHCP Students.

7.1 The Student Union Report

The President of the Student Union updated the Board on recent activities including the Winter Fair that raised over £300 for Fare Share and Barnes Children’s Literature Festival, Pyjama Day and a Popcorn Sale in aid of Shelter. The Student Union continues to work with the catering company on a new blue dot meal option. The election for the new Student Union body is taking place shortly; the response from the 6.1 cohort has been positive with those interested in standing attending Q&A sessions. Eco Week is taking place this week with events such as a clothes swap and Culture Day is being held in May.

The Chair asked the Student Trustees how they receive feedback from students regarding current issues and the Student Trustees gave an overview of how the student voice is heard via tutor group rep meetings and surveys. The student request for a learning resource room for creative students has been actioned by the College SLT.

The Chair thanked the Students Trustees for their excellent report and for their high level of engagement in their roles.

7.2 Management Accounts, plus forecast outturn, cashflow and Commentary for 4 and 5 months to 31.12.24 and 31.01.25.

The Board approved the Management Accounts for 4 and 5 months to 31.12.24 and 31.01.25.

7.3 Review of Quality Improvement Plan

The Deputy Principal introduced the QIP and highlighted that the College received an ALPS value of +0.14 which is above the Sixth Form average of +0.01. Value Added will return to the Quality Improvement Plan from September 2025 (the value wasn’t calculated post pandemic due to TAGs).

- Target 8 – Develop a new attendance strategy – The report will be ready for review at the Management Away Day in May.

- Target 17 – People Strategy – To be completed by July 2025.
- Referring to Targets 1-7 under Quality of Education, the Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor Btec results and drive-up vocational grades. In Target 6 Quality First Teaching continues to be implemented across departments to ensure classroom practice is inclusive. A revision to the number of progress reviews produced each year (Target 7) will give greater clarity to parents, more flexibility to departments regarding setting assessments and reduce teacher workload.
- Target 9 – Mental Health Strategy – has been approved by the Operational Development Team this week.
- Target 13 – Progression Guidance Strategy – this has been achieved.
- Target 20- Digital Strategy – this is due to be approved in May by Op Dev.
- Target 5 – Mission and Values – Cross College Self-Assessment Reviews are being revised to reflect the Missions and Values.

The Chair asked the Deputy Principal to give more information regarding Target 13 and the aim of the Progression Guidance Team to offer all students a careers interview. The Deputy Principal replied that the staffing of the Progression Guidance Team is being adjusted to help meet this target. The Principal added that the Personal Statement interview with each student can also be expanded to include careers advice.

A Member asked for more information regarding students who retake an A Level after they have left the College and the Deputy Principal replied that the College is unable to accommodate re-take students but they are guided to the JCQ list of approved exam centres by the Exams Officer. The Deputy Principal offered to bring data regarding how many students apply to university in the year following receiving their A Level grades (known as 6.3) to the next meeting.

Action: Deputy Principal to bring 6.3 data to next meeting.

Jane Duscherer left the meeting.

8. POLICIES

The Principal gave an overview of the Admissions Policy and Appeals Procedure 2026 and the Board noted the qualifying criteria for local authority care and make up of the Appeals Panel.

The Board approved the Admissions Policy and Appeals Procedure 2026.

9. STAFF PAY REVIEW

The Principal gave an overview of the Teacher Pay Policy and Support Staff Pay Policies that were approved at the recent Strategy and Policy Committee meeting. In addition, a review of support staff pay using the SFCA workforce survey took place and some actions were taken following this review. The gender pay gap report has been published on the website.

10. ACADEMY TRUST SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023/24 AMENDMENT

The Clerk outlined the minor amendment to the Report to ensure both the academic and personal potential of students is a focus for 2024/25.

The Board approved the Academy Trust Self-Assessment Report 2024/25.

11. DfE SCHOOL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

A Member asked if the wording of the answer to Question 18 for a future draft could be edited to remove the word “lucky”.

Action: The Director of Finance and Estates to edit the wording of Question 18 for the next Checklist.

The Board approved the DfE SRMSA.

12. REPORT BACK FROM COMMITTEES

Strategy and Policy – The Chair gave an overview of the policies approved that has also been covered in this meeting.

Finance and Estates – The Chair of the Committee gave an overview including an update regarding the refurbishment of the Caretaker’s Cottage; the current plan is to renovate the building as a house to be rented to a member of the Estates Team.

13. LINK TRUSTEE REPORTS

The Link Trustee for Safeguarding and EDI, Liz Gilroy-Scott, gave an update regarding a recent meeting with the Assistant Principal for Student Services and the DSL to review quality assurance training approaches.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Principal gave an update regarding the Duke of Edinburgh Trip to Iceland 2021 issue.

The Chair thanked Terry Price for his service to the College for over 18 years and noted he is stepping down as a Member on 27th March 2025.

The Chair added that he will be stepping down from the Board in September.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Wednesday 9TH July 2025 at 6.00pm

*The meeting closed at 7.30pm
Attendance was 100%*

Signed and date

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

| | |
|------------------|--|
| AT3 - 001 | had |
| AT3 – 002 | The Director of Finance and Estates to edit the wording of Question 18 for the next SMRSA Checklist. |

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

| C/S | Minute | Topic |
|------------|---------------|--|
| C | 1 | A Trustee asked for more details concerning keeping in contact with students who do not proceed to higher education and the Director replied the College kept in contact with about 93% of the cohort last year. |
| C | 7 | The Chair asked the Deputy Principal to give more information regarding Target 13 and the aim of the Progression Guidance Team to offer all students a careers interview. |
| S | 7 | The Chair thanked the Students Trustees for their excellent report and for their high level of engagement in their roles. |
| S | 14 | The Chair thanked Terry Price for his service to the College for over 18 years and noted he is stepping down as a Member on 27 th March 2025. |