



Education Committee Minutes

Meeting	Education Committee	Date	Thursday 17 November 2022
Location	Broadstairs College, Executive Boardroom	Time	2.30pm
Membership	John Korzeniewski (JK, Chair), Graham Razey (Chief Executive Officer), Ella Brocklebank (EB), Jason Howard (JH), Natalie Garner (NG), Peter Troke (PT), Joseph Rowstone (JR), <i>Helen Hammond (HH), Tim Kent (TM)</i>		
In Attendance	Tammy Mitchell (TM) (CEO EKC Schools Trust) Lucy McLeod (LM) (Deputy Chief Executive Officer) Nick Holbrook-Sutcliffe (NH-S) (Executive Director of Curriculum and Standards) Sharon Hollingsworth (Director of Governance) Georgia Shelton (Minute Clerk)		

(Italics denotes absence)

	ITEM	COMMENTS	ACTION
1	Welcome and apologies for absence	The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Natalie Garner and Ella Brocklebank joined by Teams. Apologies were received from Helen Hammond and Tim Kent.	
2	Declarations of Interest	There were no additional declarations to the meeting than those declared as standing.	
3	Minutes of the meeting held 16 June 2022	The minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 16 June 2022 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.	
4	Matters Arising not covered by this agenda	None.	

5	Terms of Reference for the Education Committee	<p>The purpose of the terms of reference were briefly explained.</p> <p>The terms of reference were reviewed. It was suggested that the terms be updated to reflect the recent senior leadership changes, the Chief Education Officer be removed from Committee Membership (2.1) and replaced with Deputy CEO.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Governors approved the terms of reference for the Education Committee subject to the above minor amendment.</p>	SH
6	Curriculum and Recruitment Update	<p>JH joined the meeting at 14:47.</p> <p>NH-S presented the paper and provided the following update.</p> <p><u>Sixth Form Recruitment</u> The sixth form open evening was successful, with 505 registered student interests, showing an increase in interest from 170 in the previous year.</p> <p>PT asked whether there would be the necessary space for this high level of student intake. NH-S explained that this number is an initial milestone, but that it is important to keep College standards high and the Principal of Canterbury is monitoring and will approach GLB if they need further resources.</p> <p><u>T-Levels</u> It was explained that the DfE will now fund the Level 3 Pearson Engineering qualifications, however EKC Group have a plan laid out moving forward</p> <p><u>Adult T-Levels</u> The DfE launched a low key pilot last month in which T-Levels are being delivered to students over the age of 24, ahead of a possible 2025 rollout. There are currently issues regarding the funding of 19+ T-Levels.</p>	

		<p>A Governor questioned whether anything is in place to prepare students for examinations. It was explained that the drop in achievement could be due to a lack of exams taking place throughout COVID, and that there is a need to get better at preparing for exams. Moving forward, teachers will be involved in further CPD to aid this.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED - Curriculum and Recruitment Update</p>	
7	<p>Quality Assurance Framework and Governor Engagement</p>	<p>The Deputy CEO presented a paper outlining the Quality Assurance Framework and Governor Engagement.</p> <p>It was clarified that the framework has changed this year to make use of the outstanding programme standards, and the process was explained.</p> <p>Governors were informed that they can take part in pathway reviews, alongside the principals, to speak to students.</p> <p>It was questioned what involvement governors would have within pathway reviews. It was reported that Governors can speak to learners, take part in learning visits, and have discussions with tier 1 and 2 employers. They would not be required to make judgements, just report back to the lead what they had heard. Questions would be provided to governors to assist them.</p> <p>It was queried whether governors had already engaged in the process. It was explained that this had taken place, and that it was helpful to have this outlined within 'Quality Assurance Framework 22-23'.</p> <p>It was suggested that the wider governing body members could also participate in pathway reviews. In response, it was explained that asking this of all governors could become problematic, and that it is more beneficial to delegate tasks to certain governors.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED - Quality Assurance Framework and Governor Engagement</p>	

8	Sixth Form College update	<p>NH-S presented the paper and discussed the following key items:</p> <p>A series of reviews took place in which 30 learners, as well as pathway managers, were spoken to about their chosen route and the journey that had led them to the Group. This was found impressive, as all students spoke positively about their experiences, personal development, and rules, and it was found that no student could easily raise points for improvement. Many mentioned how they are treated as young adults and about how they value this.</p> <p>It was found that students require greater clarity on their next steps in learning and how to improve their grades.</p> <p>Psychology was pinpointed as a concern, due to its vast content in comparison to other A-Levels. In addition to this, most students enrolled in this subject have not come from a science background, increasing its difficulty.</p> <p>It was noted that there is a broad geographic spread of students, which may affect attendance during the cost-of-living crisis. A governor queried whether we are able to provide these students with help for travel. It was explained that we can provide help with travel costs if the student has applied for a bursary. There needs to be greater exploration of which students have taken up the bursary. A data analysis on bursaries to be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED - Sixth Form College update</p>	LM
9	2021-22 Self-Assessment Report for Further Education	<p>The Self- Assessment Report was presented to the governors.</p> <p>It was explained that the 16-18 data is compared to the previous year; but not to the national FE average, as this data was not yet available.</p> <p>Emphasis was put on the overall grades. Personal Development has been graded as Outstanding, and the remaining were graded as good with outstanding features.</p>	

A governor questioned whether teachers are secure in their knowledge of grade boundaries, since 2021 teacher assessment grades were higher than this year's attainment grades. It was suggested that exam results had been higher in previous years and that grade boundaries were an unknown.

It was noted that Sheppey College English results were surprisingly low, as students were not prepared for a paper-based assessment and had been using computers to prepare. Emphasis was put on the need for exam preparation.

A governor queried how overall achievement for students 19+ has been impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and students needing to drop out. It was suggested that this would have had a big impact on retention, however it would be necessary to analyse the data before making any judgement. It is also important that student non-attendance and withdrawals are not assumed as a direct result of the cost-of-living crisis, and it is important not to mask other explanations so analysis of reasons for non attendance is being undertaken.

The areas for development on overall effectiveness were explained. Emphasis was put on the number of young people making expected progress in English and Maths, which is a continual challenge, as well as the need for better preparation for exam-based programmes, and differentiation between learner targets.

It was explained that there are currently English and Maths strategies in place which are being reviewed. These regularly require improvement, and it was questioned whether it is necessary to change strategies often, or whether more time should be spent on the current strategies.

A governor questioned what data would be provided to Ofsted and emphasised how important presentation of this data can be; pages of red data reflect poorly on the college when it is comparing two very different years. It was explained that all data is available to them directly, and the presentation issue was noted. It is important to be confident about what is happening within workspaces and classrooms, and not just on the data presented.

		<p>A governor queried whether English and Maths are handicapping students' progress. It was suggested that it can do, but students destinations are very positive.</p> <p>The committee agreed the following overall grades:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Education- Good with outstanding features • Behaviour & Attitudes- Good with outstanding features • Personal Development- Outstanding • Leadership & Management- Good with outstanding features • Education Programmes for Young People- Good with outstanding features • Adult Programmes- Good with outstanding features • Apprenticeships- Good with outstanding features • High Needs- Good with outstanding features. <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Governors approved the Group self-assessment Report 2021-22</p>	
10	2022-23 Quality Improvement Plan for Further Education	<p>The committee discussed and noted the 2022/23 Quality Improvement Plan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Governors approved the 2022/23 Quality Improvement Plan.</p>	
11	2022-23 Progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for the Nurseries	<p>The Quality Improvement Plan for the Nurseries was summarised by the CEO of the Trust, with emphasis being placed on strengthening the curriculum to ensure consistent progression of skills and knowledge, to enhance the impact of assessment practices on learning, and the need to focus on post covid challenges such as children in pre-school getting experience, and staff training being kept up to date.</p> <p>A governor questioned whether there are enough qualified staff to tighten assessment practices. It was explained that there are challenges in recruitment, with 3 vacancies at current. This is an ongoing challenge and, despite above sector average pay being introduced, this is still not attracting staff.</p>	

		<p>A governor queried whether qualified students within the EKC Group could be employed within the nurseries. It was explained that most who are qualified for this, wish to go to university, and that there are planned discussions with students regarding going into employment early, apprenticeships, and employment rates following university, but this must be broached carefully to avoid removing ambition.</p> <p>A governor asked whether the nursery ratios were in line with government regulations. It was explained that the ratios are as should be, and that it would not be comfortable to increase the ratio, especially considering difficulty in recruitment of staff.</p> <p>It was questioned whether the nurseries were successfully recruiting children. It was explained that the nurseries are currently 96% full for the number of staff that they have. There is currently a waiting list of children, in preparation for new staff recruitment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Governors approved the Nurseries Quality Improvement Plan 2022 – 2023</p>	
12	Education CPIs	<p>LM presented the Education CPIs to the committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the Group Targets for the year have increased slightly from the previous year, and that while this is a slight stretch, it should not be seen as too ambitious as it is achievable.</p> <p>A governor noted how A07 and A08 seem to be completely different from the other CPI's. It was suggested that this is as it is based on apprenticeships and the predictions of the managing director for the coming year. It is important to remember that this is also based on the variation of finish dates.</p> <p>Governors requested an update on CPI's to be given at each meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Governors approved the Education CPIs 2022-2023.</p>	LM

13	Group position statement against the enhanced inspection framework	<p>The enhanced inspection framework was summarised by LM for governors, and it was explained that to be judged as 'strong', a certain criterion must be met.</p> <p>It was suggested that an updated version of this would be provided to governors, containing examples for point 2. In addition to this, localised group position statements for each college will be shared, to ensure that all are aware of their district's individual needs.</p> <p>The chair questioned governors on whether they feel prepared for their role in Ofsted, and whether they are happy with the support provided to them.</p> <p>It was suggested that there should be further clarification on how leaders and managers contribute to skills needs. A mock run through of the enhanced framework will be proposed as preparation, and to help governors to generate meaningful answers.</p> <p>A governor questioned whether Ofsted would approach parents. It was explained that the EKC Group have not been asked to identify specific parents, but that governors who are parents may be approached, but that this experience could only be seen as beneficial.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED – Group position statement against the enhanced inspection framework</p>	
14	Student Bursary process and claims at Q1	<p>LM presented the paper on Student Bursary process and claims at Q1 and summarised the key headlines.</p> <p>It was suggested that issues occurring during processing is due to the lack of evidence provided or late application, however measures have been put in place to support students during bursary process.</p> <p>The volume of applications is an eye opener and is expected to continue to increase due to the cost-of-living crisis.</p>	

		<p>A governor questioned whether vulnerable student's bursaries are being prioritised. It was explained that these are being prioritised and that this is aided by the local authority evidence.</p> <p>A governor questioned how Sheppey was able to process 100% of their applicants while Dover could only process 50%, despite having such similar numbers. It was suggested that Sheppey have been very efficient in this, but that Dover is likely to have received late applications which have not yet been processed.</p> <p>It was queried whether this could have an impact on retention. It was explained that this likely would have an impact, but that it is difficult to confirm this without assessing it first.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED - Student Bursary process and claims at Q1</p> <p>GR left the meeting at 16:17</p>	
15	Student Admissions Policy	<p>LM explained that minor changes have been made involving the interview process and Assessment Centres, the admissions to HE policy suggesting that interviews are no longer mandatory in all programmes, and the wording of 'student' to 'applicant'.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPROVED – Governors approved the Student Admissions Policy</p>	
16	Annual report on student exclusions	<p>LM presented the Exclusion Report 2021-22 drawing attention to the key items therein.</p> <p>It was explained that Stage 3 disciplinaries have increased, but that this may be as more students were present on campus this year, in comparison to during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>A governor suggested that the majority of disciplinaries are based on attendance, and the approach to challenging attendance was questioned. It was explained that these disciplinary meetings are based on providing students with support, rather than discipline, and that it is a necessary step in helping students.</p>	

		<p>It was queried why transgender students were identified within the data, and whether this was not based on their sex identity. It was suggested that this could be emphasising the minority. It was argued that it is important to know this figure as it will identify systematic problems regarding a vulnerable group, however it may not be necessary to show within this data.</p> <p>It was noted that the majority of exclusions are within construction. It was suggested that this may be due to the number of students coming from alternative education providers, which can come with behavioural problems.</p> <p>A governor questioned how this could be improved. It was suggested that more interaction between students and employers would be beneficial, and that a 'one-man band' mindset in construction could emphasize poor culture and ethos for students and their expectations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED – Annual report on student exclusions</p>	
17	Annual student progression and destinations report (at Group level)	<p>NH-S explained that the proportion of students in positive destinations has increased since the previous year, and negative destinations has decreased.</p> <p>The importance of encouraging students to take part in Levels 3, 4, and 5 was emphasised, as well as the need for this in order to progress to a positive destination.</p> <p>Clarification on what is seen as a 'positive destination' was asked for. It was suggested that a positive destination is considered as university, a further college course, or going in to work, and that is important that we are ambitious for learners. It was explained that there is a need for colleges to name employers and institutions to ensure the validity of the data.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED – Annual student progression and destinations report (at Group level)</p>	
18	Feedback/Minutes of the Local Boards	<p>The Chair invited feedback from the respective Local College Board Chairs.</p>	

	<p><u>Ashford College</u> NG suggested that this academic year had started positively with improvements in achievement rates. It was noted that the college would like to see improvements in terms of the English and Maths 2-year programme, methods of developing soft skills, and learner/ employer interviews.</p> <p><u>Broadstairs College</u> PT advised that feedback from both students and staff shows that many do not feel able to contact counselling services. There is discomfort in gaining support via mentors, as many students are not aware of who their mentor is or do not feel comfortable talking to a member of staff yet. A peer mentoring service was suggested, however it was agreed that this can result in emotional contagion, as found in the trial of 'Talk-To-A-Mate' in Canterbury College. It was advised that it is important to identify where students sit on this spectrum, as some may benefit from counselling, whereas others may benefit from being within a classroom.</p> <p><u>Folkestone College</u> EB emphasised the positive impacts of the on-boarding of a new governor to their LCB, as well as the almost completion of the new build, and the increasing levels of student applications. It was also suggested that the recent Staff Survey was very beneficial, but it is important to consider whether this is reflective of the majority, and whether anonymity is ensured. Emphasis was put on the challenge of student retention, sourcing employment with the cost-of-living, and staff absences. There is an aim to focus on t-levels as a positive path, and the junior college, as well as its promotion.</p> <p>Governor requested an update on the Junior College to be provided at the next Education Committee.</p> <p><u>Sheppey College</u> JS explained that the College would benefit from having governors come into the college more frequently and use pathway guidance to do this more successfully. JS suggested that at the next LCB meeting, the first point of discussion will be the impact of governors between then and now.</p>	<p>NH-S</p>
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19	Any other business	PT offered to share the East Kent Chamber of Commerce Newsletter to all members. The Director of Governance to circulate to members.	SH
20	Matters Considered Confidential	There were no matters considered to be confidential.	
21	Date and Time of Next Meeting	Thursday, 2 March 2023 at Folkestone at 2.30pm.	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:38.

Signed: 

Print: John Korzeniewski

Date: 2 March 2023