

Education Committee Minutes

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| Meeting | Education Committee | Date | 2 March 2023 |
| Location | Folkestone Executive Boardroom | Time | 2.30pm |
| Membership | John Korzeniewski (JK, Chair), Graham Razey (Chief Executive Officer, CEO), Ella Brocklebank (EB), Jason Howard (JH), Natalie Garner (NG), Peter Troke (PT), Joseph Rowstone (JR), Helen Hammond (HH), Tim Kent (TK) | | |
| In Attendance | Tammy Mitchell (TM) (CEO EKC Schools Trust) Lucy McLeod (LM) (Deputy CEO) Neala Whybrow (NW) (Executive Director of Education) Nick Holbrook-Sutcliffe (NH-S) (Executive Director of Curriculum and Standards) Sharon Hollingsworth (SH) (Director of Governance) Georgia Shelton (GS) (Minute Clerk) | | |

(Italics denotes absence)

| | ITEM | COMMENTS | ACTION |
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| 1 | Welcome and apologies for absence | The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. All were present with no apologies received. Peter Troke and Natalie Garner attended via Teams. | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest | There were no additional declarations to the meeting than those declared as standing. | |
| 3 | Minutes of the meeting held 17 November 2022 | The minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on the 17 th of November 2022 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair. | |
| 4 | Matters Arising not covered by this agenda: | NH-S outlined how successful sixth form college applications have been, and how applications have now been closed due to high numbers. It is important to do this to provide the best experience possible to students who do start with us, by ensuring the right resources are in place. | |

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| | <p>Item 6- Curriculum and Recruitment update</p> <p>Item 8 – Sixth Form College, data analysis on take up of bursaries</p> | <p>A governor questioned how many of these would have come to college anyway, and what percentage we have gained from other education providers. It was explained that there is only a 5% shift in this, indicating that students are coming from other education providers.</p> <p>It was questioned how viable group sizes are from a financial side. NH-S explained that some groups are bigger than others, with music and creative subjects having lesser numbers. However, the business plan accounts for this.</p> <p>The student governor enquired whether there is anything that can be done to encourage larger numbers of students to have interest in creative subjects. It was suggested that subject intake is based on the nature of the learners coming through, with many of them looking to take sciences and medical subjects currently. It was suggested that, if a student wanted to take a creative pathway, then other programmes available across the Group would be more suitable in reaching their goals.</p> <p>A governor requested an example of an Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQ) for context. It was explained that they are currently being developed, and that a larger example would be like a performing arts BTEC, and smaller being an add-on to an A Level offer, such as a public services programme alongside two other suitable A Levels.</p> <p>NH-S asked governors whether it would be beneficial to have Emma Wilkinson, Director of EKC Sixth Form, attend the next Education Committee to deliver a paper on the Sixth Form College. It was agreed that this would be beneficial to the committee.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AGREED: EW to attend the next Education Committee and provide a paper on the Sixth Form College.</p> | <p>NH-S</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>Update on Junior Colleges</p> | <p>There has been work taking place at Broadstairs College to develop a specialist offer for students. We have been able to see the benefits of specialist colleges from Folkestone and Spring Lane.</p> <p>A large number of applications have come in, with some not being suitable for offer.</p> <p>It was questioned whether eligible students are being turned away. It may be possible to expand to take these students in, but expansion is down to local discretion. Previously, Broadstairs had received 200+ applicants, but this was challenging and so principals are encouraged to expand this with caution and recruit with integrity.</p> | |

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| | | <p>A governor explained how beneficial Canterbury College had been for their child and would like to advocate for the growth of EKC Group to allow more children to attend. Many children suffer from anxiety and depression, and mainstream education is not right for them. It is important that all children have the same opportunities.</p> <p>The CEO specified that we want to get a growth model right to give the best to these students, but that it is not practical to expand in this way. Funding is given to the colleges to deliver 16 hours of education, but we deliver 25 with no contribution. This is done to be inclusive and to meet local needs, but this is terribly funded and it would be challenging to expand based on the current funding model.</p> <p>A governor asked what can be done to change this, and it was suggested that a positive outcome from next week's Ofsted Inspection could boost attention to the Group, and we could then take this to MPs and discuss a growth model.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: Update on Junior Colleges.</p> | |
| 6 | Safeguarding & Prevent update | <p>LM summarised the content of the Safeguarding Paper.</p> <p>Emphasis was put on the 30% increase in incidences every year, and how the most occur in October, November, and January. The data also showed how safeguarding issues are most likely to occur within looked after groups and care leavers.</p> <p>LM explained how the ratio of safeguarding instances has changed from 60:40, female: male last year, to 50:50 this year. It was suggested that this is most likely due to more conversations taking place with male students about mental health. Tutorials are continuing to take place with the most recent one being on 'Fake News' and 'Cyber Security'. Students are responding positively to these, with lots of debate on hate crime and Andrew Tate.</p> <p>Work is also continuing to take place on cleansing the Single Central Record and ensuring that all staff have DBSs and Child Barred checks. Policies and procedures for visitors are also being adjusted and updated.</p> <p>LM wanted to make governors aware of a few incidents of students' apathy towards drugs currently, with some instances of parents taking similar attitudes. A governor suggested that some work places hold random drug testing and asked whether, with parent's permissions, this is something</p> | |

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| | | <p>that Apprenticeship providers could do. LM explained that this is possible with parental permission, but it would need to be investigated further.</p> <p>Capacity was questioned, and whether the increasing safeguarding incidents are having an impact on this. LM explained that Canterbury College has invested in mentors within the Sixth Form College who are having a big impact on safeguarding. It was suggested that there is always more that can be done, but currently we are not at a critical stage.</p> <p>With a variety of tutorials taking place, it was questioned whether any of these have been triggering for learners. It was explained that this was reported following the consent and healthy relationships tutorial, and that mentors are on-hand during difficult subject areas. Counselling teams have also been made aware, and a clear message is given at the beginning of tutorials, letting students know that they are able to leave the room at any time if they find it triggering. Overall, it is found that talking about these subjects more is making students feel more comfortable; tutorials are also adjusted based on the learner, and is different for supported learning, adult learners, junior college, and apprenticeships.</p> <p>It was suggested that topics such as Andrew Tate could get students' tempers rising- is there any support for staff in these instances? It was explained that the team delivering these tutorials gather beforehand to discuss how this will be presented and ensure that everyone is comfortable. Staff do not have to deliver any tutorials if they are not comfortable doing so. 'Consent and Healthy Relationships' was a challenging topic at first and materials were made available on the 'Consent Collective' site support materials for staff on how to tackle subjects.</p> <p>A governor questioned if this topic had come up in any staff surveys. The CEO explained that this topic did appear in the recent staff forum but should be managed locally. LM explained that this could be done, but it is important not to bombard staff with lots of surveys. It was suggested that mentors are on hand to ensure that staff feel comfortable in delivering this training.</p> <p>In a recent Student Experience Review at Dover, around 100 learners were spoken to and very few of them knew about British values and many couldn't remember all the subjects discussed in tutorials; it was questioned whether staff are aware of this gap. LM suggested that we are aware that British values is an area to improve, and it is on the QIP and in the case of an Ofsted inspection inspectors will be more delving questions than were asked at the Student Experience review, but a separate governor suggested that learners were able to articulate this at Sheppey.</p> | |
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| | | <p>Construction is one of the worst areas for male suicide, it was questioned what can be done to prevent this. It is important to engage with male students early and break down stigma; we don't want to create issues by discussing this topic, but we want students to be aware. It was suggested that the development of a Mental Health Strategy would be beneficial, as well as employer talks and campaigning on construction sites.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: Safeguarding & Prevent update</p> | |
| 7 | Standards of teaching, learning and assessment update including CPIs | <p>The main area of focus at the moment is attendance in itself and, whilst it is important not to make excuses for poor attendance, the focus needs to also be on progression of learners as well.</p> <p>LM explained how the message we are aiming to give during the Ofsted Inspection is that attendance does not yet meet our high expectations, but this is due to how inclusive we are; this comes with challenges, but it is the right thing to do for the students. Attendance is not where we want it to be, but focus should be on progress. We take action to improve this though, and it is constantly on the agenda.</p> <p>Within the Sixth Form College, many learners' attendance has been affected by the need to travel to college and the train strikes. Online sessions were beneficial on strike days to help cope with this.</p> <p>A governor suggested that Ashford College incentivises attendance, which has seen some movement. It was suggested that vouchers, money, and trips may encourage attendance briefly, but the best way to keep students engaged is through good teaching and learning.</p> <p>It was questioned whether it is possible to identify students likely to have poor attendance before they have started and have a plan in place for when they start. It was explained that schools wouldn't disclose this information; challenges could be negated if we knew this information.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: Standards of teaching, learning and assessment update including CPIs</p> | |
| 8 | QIP 2022-23 Further Education Terms 1-3 update | <p>The QIP was presented, and NH-S explained how the QIP is a live document which is changing and updating regularly.</p> <p>It was questioned whether these recent changes are because of the Ofsted Inspection. It was explained that these changes began before we were aware of the Ofsted Inspection as we felt that</p> | |

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| | | <p>we were becoming focused on activity over impact. A lot of work and time has gone into making this document relevant.</p> <p>A governor asked whether it would be useful to have a regular screenshot of the live document with a specific date attached, rather than having a title of 'Term 3 Update'. This would allow us to see progress and how the QIP has moved on. It was agreed that document control would be sensible.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: QIP 2022-23 Further Education Terms 1-3 update</p> | |
| 9 | Mid-Year Review of Nurseries QIP 2022 – 2023 | <p>TM summarised the EKC Nurseries Progress document.</p> <p>It was noted that there is an increase in the levels of SEND across nurseries, but it is important to be mindful of the lack of education for many children due to COVID. Whilst some children may be presenting special educational needs now, this may change over time.</p> <p>It was also suggested that assessment practises were not strong enough previously, but a lot of work has been done on this to improve. It is complex to track learning and development in nursery aged children.</p> <p>It was questioned why nurseries are inspected separately to the Colleges. It was explained that nurseries require a different framework and would be assessed differently.</p> <p>A governor asked why nurseries are not a part of the Trust. The Group CEO explained that assets cannot be transferred out of FE without KCC's permission, but that there is a plan in place for the future that governors will be made aware of imminently.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: Mid-Year Review of Nurseries QIP 2022 – 2023</p> | |
| 10 | Minutes of the Local College Boards | <p>Ashford College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance in English and Maths- English and Maths are currently under rapid improvement due to the poor attendance. - Safeguarding- There was an incident in which some male students became aggressive towards a member of staff due to Andrew Tate content. This is now being tackled by tutorials on the topic. - Retention- There is a good level of retention, with a 96% upward trajectory. Staff absence has improved by 3%. | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pathway Reviews- Governors have agreed to have a day where they, alongside SLT, attend a joint pathway review. This was noted by governors as a good idea. <p>Broadstairs College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Mental Health Units- It was suggested that Strategic Mental Health Units could be formed at each of the college sites to mitigate the impact of mental health and the loss of income to the Group due to withdrawals. - Pathway Review Outcomes- The accuracy of pathways reviews was questioned, and it was suggested that the grading can be unrealistic. English and Maths were graded close to 100% but are the areas with some of the most difficulty. NW suggested that the 11 standards should give a holistic overview of the subject, and she offered to attend the next LCB meeting to discuss this. <p style="text-align: center;">AGREED: Committee to respond to the formation of a Mental Health Unit at each College.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AGREED: NW to attend the next Broadstairs Local Board Meeting to offer her perspective on Pathway Reviews. The offer to be open to all colleges.</p> <p>Canterbury College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pathway Reviews- It was explained that all LCB members have signed up to do pathway reviews and have either completed them recently or will complete them in the coming weeks. HH expressed how interested she is in the idea of a joint pathway review as suggested by Ashford. - Sixth Form College Applications- Concern was expressed around staff time being taken for interviews, but this problem has since been resolved. <p>Dover College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased Achievements for 16-18 Learners- English and Maths have been identified as at risk of low achievement, but achievement boards and actions have been set. - Increased Employer Engagement- The opening of the engineering centre was held in Term 2 and has created positive work placement discussion. Work placements were secured for several students. - Impact on Curriculum Design and the Development of the Student Union- It was explained that having two Student Union Presidents eased the workload and has worked well. It was agreed that Student Union Presidents could provide a paper to the local college board on the work that they have been doing. | <p>ALL NW</p> |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Experience Review- It was noted that during a Student Experience Review, college was described as 'life-changing'. It was found overall that student satisfaction was high. <p><i>The CEO left the meeting at 15.56.</i></p> <p>Folkestone College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance- There are on-going concerns regarding attendance and retention. The college has introduced incentives to increase Maths and English attendance, such as a 'Love2Shop' voucher for 100% attendance in a term. - Focus on Strengthening Board- Folkestone Local Board are looking to strengthen their membership and have new members in HE and hospitality areas joining them. There is also due to be student president elections for a new member to be on the board. <p>Sheppey College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification of the EKC Group Drug Policy- It was agreed that there is a feeling of apathy towards drugs among students across the group. As previously mentioned, it was questioned whether young people on work experience could be randomly drug tested with parental permission. - New Student Behaviours- Staff are spending a lot of time managing new behaviours among students which are being displayed at school at a later age than normal. These have come to surface as students have missed out on being in a school setting due to COVID. - English and Maths GCSE Results- At the previous meeting, it was suggested that Sheppey students did not have an accurate image of exam conditions. Teachers have been working with students to improve this, and AS is taking the English GCSE with them to get an idea of the course. <p><i>TK left the meeting at 16.06.</i></p> <p>The Chair explained the importance of these discussions, and summarised the recurring themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employer engagement for local boards and curriculum, and what we can do. - The difference a focussed Student Union President can make. <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED – Feedback/Minutes of the Local College Boards</p> | |
| 11 | Any Other Business | None. | |

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16:08.

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| 12 | Matters Considered Confidential | None. | |
| 13 | Date and Time of Next Meeting | Thursday, 15 June 2023 at 2.30pm | |

Signed: *JMKorzeniowski*

Print: JOHN KORZENIEWSKI

Date: 15-06-23