

Education Committee Minutes

Meeting	Education Committee	Date	29 February 2024
Location	Executive Boardroom, Folkestone College	Time	2.30pm
Membership	John Korzeniewski (JK, Chair), <i>Graham Razey (Chief Executive Officer, CEO), Ella Brocklebank (EB), Jason Howard (JH), Natalie Garner (NG), Peter Troke (PT), Luca Fasulo (LF), Helen Hammond (HH), Tammy Mitchell (TM)</i>		
In Attendance	<i>Lucy McLeod (LM) (Deputy CEO)</i> Neala Whybrow (NW) (Executive Director of Education) Nick Holbrook-Sutcliffe (NH-S) (Executive Director of Curriculum and Standards) Sharon Hollingsworth (SH) (Group Director of Governance) Georgia Shelton (GS) (Governance Officer)		

(Italics denotes absence)

	ITEM	COMMENTS	ACTION
1	Welcome and apologies for absence	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received for Natalie Garner, Ella Brocklebank, Graham Razey and Lucy McLeod, with Nick Holbrook-Sutcliffe joining via Teams.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated members on the Beacon Award for Excellence in Governance and commended the Full Governing Board.</p>	
2	Declarations of Interest	There were no additional declarations to the meeting other than those declared as standing.	
3	Minutes of the meeting held 16 November 2023 including any	The minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on the 16 November 2023 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.	

	confidential minutes		
4	Matters Arising not covered by this agenda:	There were no matters arising.	
5	Learner Progression and Destination to include the monitoring of 18+ and care experienced learners	<p>The Chief Student Officer (CSO) summarised the learner progression and destination data following a request of clarity at the previous meeting.</p> <p>It was noted how a large number of positive destinations are 'adults continuing an existing programme of learning', and of that, 43% are studying 2-year level 2 courses showing great progression for adults.</p> <p>Non-positive destinations showed a high proportion of learners becoming 'unemployed and looking for work' or 'unemployed and not looking for work'. Of these categories, many were studying a Maths or English qualification, showing that there needs to be an improvement in the quality of information, advice, and guidance (IAG). This has been passed on to the Group Head of HE and Careers.</p> <p>The Chief Student Officer suggested that destinations for care experienced learners are positive overall, with a small number of non-positive destinations falling into the 'unemployed and not looking for work' category. It was again suggested that data is shared with the Group Head of HE and Careers to ensure that all is being done to support progression and destinations.</p> <p>Governors questioned the quality of career advice being received by students. The CSO suggested that students have access to careers provisions at each site, as well as one-to-one or group advice sessions.</p> <p>It was noted how insightful this paper has been, and how beneficial it will be in targeting data in the future. In the meantime, a piece of work is being done on the Enrichment, Employability and Pastoral (EEP)online modules, and how best to link supports with the Adult Education Budget (AEB). Governors suggested how beneficial it could be to use enrolment as an opportunity to understand adults' progression intentions.</p>	

		NOTED: The Learner Progression and Destination report, including the monitoring of 18+ and care experienced learners.	
6	Subcontracting	<p>The Subcontracting paper was summarised by the Chief Education Officer.</p> <p>Governors noted how informative this paper is in demonstrating the positives and negatives of subcontracting, but members could not understand why this is now being re-considered, given the decision taken previously not to subcontract. Governors questioned whether any changes have taken place since this was last discussed. The Chief Education Officer suggested that this should be reviewed annually, especially in the context of our AEB performance and our strategies around future alternative provision.</p> <p>It was suggested that revisiting the adult education strategy may be more beneficial than subcontracting; tailoring the strategy to include adult only programmes, and making courses more sector driven could have a positive impact on adult numbers.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether the AEB is impacted by the importance of it to individuals at delivery level, as the delivery of this is likely secondary to lecturer's primary roles. The Chief Education Officer stated that they would be meeting with curriculum leaders as part of a new curriculum planning process, with a particular focus on AEB this academic year, to ensure the concerns above are addressed. This will feed into subsequent performance reviews.</p> <p>The Chair summarised that there is little appetite in the Education Committee for subcontracting, but it was agreed that the Adult Education Budget offer needs to be improved, with a new set of principles to underpin a new strategy.</p> <p>NOTED: Subcontracting.</p>	
7	Safeguarding & Prevent Update	<p>The Safeguarding & Prevent update was given, and the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A slight change to the top 5 incident types has taken place, to now include substance abuse. There has been a culture shift around parental awareness and acceptance of drug use, giving senior leadership less support in overcoming this. - The Safeguarding Committee will change how child-on-child abuse is reported; this will now be split into sub-categories to better tackle the route of the problem. 	

		<p>Governors questioned whether this sub-categorisation would be beneficial, or whether it would further complicate child-on-child abuse. The Chief Student Officer suggested that this would raise awareness and impact how we respond to and support students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was suggested that the Safeguarding Action Plan is progressing well, and the new monitoring and filtering system was highlighted due to its yellow categorisation. This is RAG rated in this way due to the over sensitivity of filtering. Overall, this a positive change, with further work needing to take place. Additionally, a system of systematically passing student safeguarding information on to Higher Education Institutions is being investigated. <p>Governors questioned how passing student safeguarding information would work for learners becoming adults. It was suggested that this is a grey area, but that this is being investigated with other Higher Education providers. A college in the midlands has created a service level agreement where students could opt out of sharing information, which was agreed would work well.</p> <p>It was queried how effective the Group's lockdown process is. The Chief Student Officer suggested that while a lockdown process is in place, there is no method of quick communication for this such as an alarm or on-screen alert. The Student Governor suggested that there needs to be better communication on what this process is, or a refresher for students who are unaware.</p> <p>AGREED: The Group lockdown process to be reiterated to students, and a method of quick communication to be investigated.</p> <p>The Mental Health Strategy was summarised, and the Chief Student Officer suggested that work is taking place to investigate stakeholder involvement, for example the Group are hoping to collaborate with the NHS and Porchlight on this, and the Head of Communications and Business Development at Jenners is looking to speak to construction students around mental health.</p> <p>The CSO made governors aware of the DfE Gender Questioning Consultation taking place, which is due to close in a few weeks; consultations and student feedback groups are taking place to feedback to the DfE. There was a shared feeling of concern amongst governors around the suggestions made, and how these conflict with the Group's values and culture; these views are echoed by leaders in the</p>	NW
--	--	---	----

		<p>Primary School setting. Governors agreed that while it is beneficial to have an opportunity to feedback to the DfE, a lack of guidance on this is better than detrimental guidance.</p> <p>The Chair of the Broadstairs Local College Board suggested that local board members may be interested in involvement within the above strategy.</p> <p>AGREED: The Chief Student Officer to liaise with the Broadstairs Local College Board Chair to discuss stakeholder involvement in the Mental Health Strategy.</p> <p>NOTED: The Safeguarding and Prevent Update.</p>	NW
8	Standards of TLA Update & Education CPI's to include report on full cost recovery	<p>The Chief Education Officer updated governors on the standards of Teaching, Learning and Assessment with additional reference requested on full cost recovery.</p> <p>Attendance continues to be a struggle, but this is continuously being challenged, and progress is being made daily. The Chief Education Officer supplied analysis that demonstrated a national issue with attendance at all levels of education.</p> <p>Retention of young people is a key focus, with work being done to focus measurement of progression through levels of learning and into year 2 of programmes. Members were directed to the perceived drop in level 2 retention, and it was explained that this is not a negative impact, as this reflects a significant increase in students engaging at level 2, in line with the strategy.</p> <p>Governors questioned where retention falls in terms of specific subjects. It was noted that this varies across the group but there was a clear correlation with the quality of teaching.</p> <p>The positive increase in Sheppey College's grading profile was noted, and governors questioned how robust this is. The Chief Education Officer suggested that a validation framework initiated at the end of last academic year enables GLB to provide assurance in the decisions made at business unit level, and the evidence drawn upon in making their judgements.</p> <p>Governors suggested that 92% retention seems quite positive, but questioned whether we should be happy with this result. It was explained that retention was in line with the aspirational strategy to increase numbers progressing through 2-year programmes and to higher levels.</p>	

		NOTED: The Standards of TLA Update and Education CPI's including report on full cost recovery	
9	QIP 2023-24 Further Education Terms 1-3 Update	<p>The QIP was summarised, and members were asked for comment.</p> <p>The Chief Education Officer suggested that the main areas of focus are vocational exam-based programmes, as well as the quality of support for learners with self-declared disabilities and without Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).</p> <p>Governors suggested that it is difficult to see progress in exam-based programmes without in-year assessments and suggested that an update at the next meeting with further qualitative detail around work being done would be beneficial.</p> <p>AGREED: An update on progress made within exam-based examinations to go to the next meeting.</p> <p>It was explained that working groups and digital discussions are currently taking place to discuss tools and approaches that can be used to better support learners with declared needs after seeing good practice at other providers.</p> <p>AGREED: An update to be provided on plans to further support learners with declared needs.</p> <p>The Chair questioned whether there should be further work done on governor attendance and what can be done to improve this. Governors suggested that attendance was less of an issue when hybrid meetings were a possibility, and it was suggested that the chair take this forward.</p> <p>AGREED: Discuss hybrid meetings with the Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>NOTED: The Term 1-3 QIP Update.</p>	<p>NH-S</p> <p>NH-S</p> <p>JK</p>
10	Mid-Year Review of Nurseries QIP 2023-24	<p>The Chief Student Officer gave an update on nurseries, and the following was highlighted:</p> <p>Strategies have been put in place to increase recruitment of staff; due to this Folkestone and Canterbury nurseries are now fully staffed.</p>	

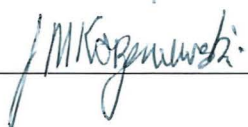
		<p>The financial update was summarised, and it was suggested that all nurseries are performing above their contribution level.</p> <p>Governors questioned why Broadstairs nursery have been targeted for their utility costs. It was suggested that Broadstairs are the only nursery to pay for their own utility costs due to their metre set up.</p> <p>The Folkestone safeguarding referral was a cause for concern. The EKC Schools Trust CEO suggested that this has been dealt with well and is no longer a cause for concern.</p> <p>It was noted by governors how positive the collaborations between colleges, primary schools, and nurseries are.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: The Mid-Year Review of Nurseries QIP 2023-24.</p>	
11	Feedback/Minutes of the Local Boards	<p>The Local College Board (LCB) chairs summarised their previous meetings and the following was noted:</p> <p><u>ASHFORD</u> The Ashford LCB noted it would be beneficial to discuss how best to improve marketing and enrolment on adult courses. Governors suggested that this is a Group wide problem that we are looking to overcome.</p> <p>Ashford are developing a partnership with Maclaren and Formula 1; it was questioned how members of the board could support this programme and getting potential female students interested in engineering. It was explained that there are low numbers of women in engineering nationally, but that providing opportunity at an early age is best way to tackle this.</p> <p><u>BROADSTAIRS</u> The Chair of Broadstairs LCB suggested that students and staff have been experiencing poor wi-fi signal across the site which is having an impact on studying. The student governor suggested that this is also a problem at Canterbury College. Governors agreed that it would be beneficial for this to be investigated further with Dan Shelley (Chief Infrastructure and Transformation Officer) and Barry Boden (Group Director of Digital); the Chief Education Officer volunteered to take this forward.</p>	

	<p>AGREED: Poor signal across the college sites to be investigated and taken to the Full Governing Body.</p> <p>It was also suggested that the Junior College catering department requires development due to the lack of space. The executives present suggested that this development is being worked up, but that this has not yet been agreed.</p> <p><u>CANTERBURY</u></p> <p>The Chair of Canterbury LCB expressed the board's concern over the 2-year level 2 courses, but explained that this will be monitored over time, as this is still a new development.</p> <p>It was suggested that collaboration amongst the local boards, and sharing practise, would be beneficial. The Education Committee Chair suggested that it would be important to think about how local boards feed into this committee.</p> <p>AGREED: Discuss with the Chair of Governors how local boards feed into the Education Committee and what else can be done in terms of collaboration.</p> <p><i>TM left the meeting at 16:20.</i></p> <p><u>DOVER</u></p> <p>The Dover LCB suggested that it is important to investigate the role of transition tutors and how they impact English and Maths.</p> <p><u>FOLKESTONE</u></p> <p>The Folkestone LCB recommended that further utilisation of the immersive classrooms would be beneficial. The Chief Student Officer explained that a lack of knowledge around the immersive classrooms has come because of delays preventing training from taking place before the summer. Training has been created for staff, but a priority list needs to be created on who to roll this out to first.</p> <p><u>SHEPPEY</u></p>	NH-S/JK JK
--	---	---

		<p>The Chair of Sheppey LCB expressed the board's concern over grading profiling, but explained that they felt reassured following the Teaching, Learning and Assessment paper that this error had been amended.</p> <p>Following student experience reviews, it was found that many felt catering needed to be improved, with many students spending travel money on buying lunches elsewhere.</p> <p>The Chair asked for feedback following the Sheppey Secondary School consultation. Those who attended noted that parents were very supportive of EKC Sheppey Secondary School and were excited at the concept of education coming from a local provider.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTED: Feedback/Minutes of the Local Boards</p>	
12	Any Other Business	<p>A governor noted a statement in The Times that stated 1 in 9 children is registered as having a disability. It was questioned whether the Group are prepared for this cohort approaching college age in the next few years.</p> <p>Governors noted their confidence in the Group Leadership Team and were assured in how forward thinking they are.</p>	
13	Matters Considered Confidential	There are no matters considered confidential.	
14	Date and Time of Next Meeting	The next meeting will take place on Thursday 13th June 2024, 2.30pm, at Broadstairs College.	

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16:40pm.

Signed: _____



Print: John Korzeniewski

Date: 13th June 2024

