

Minutes of Curriculum and Quality Committee

Date: 19th June 2025

Time: 4.30 pm

Location: S10, Itchen College

Present: Mrs S Hammett - Chair
Mr A Fitt
Mr A Scott - Principal

Mrs M Harris-Bridge
Mr M McCauley
Mr B Jones

Apologies: Mr M Stancheris

Ms S Garner

In attendance Miss F McIntyre - Clerk
Mr M Jones - Vice Principal

Mrs R Stratton - Deputy Principal

1 Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies received and accepted as above.

2 Declarations of interest

No new declarations of interest were made.

3 Minutes of the last meetings

Matters airing:

Destination data report has been updated and the unknown destination has improved from 25% to 23% unknown. Employment has increased and FE 3 to 4%.

Q: Does this suggest this is a better time to do destination data?

A: Operationally no as when reported in November there is a big push for staff workload to make it happen.

Q: Is there anything to be said about 23% unknown?

A: Will keep striving to reduce but there are often reasons.

Q: Do other Wessex colleges have better data with unknowns?

A: Will Ask.

Action RS

Q: Update on numbers for T Levels for September?

A: Early Years is positive, first cohort 13 initially then 10 and 9. Next year's group of 22 to 24 which is positive.

T Level health ran this year for the first time with two groups of 20. Numbers are looking lower and planned for two groups but took the decision to reduce to one. There is a broad offer with health and care courses. T Level is a pathway into Nursing and does not link into social care or other routes.

Planning to run T Level media content creation and marketing. 6 applicants for marketing and 3 for media. Neither is in a strong position. Doing a joint session for marketing and media as students sometimes do not know which one they want to do.

Q: How are T Levels going nationally?

A: Similar. Some of the subjects that were going to be defunded this summer have not so are still attractive to students. Example triple business.

Training FE dashboard for governor. Dashboard not in steady state so better to wait till Spring term.

Governors need to be aware of its use so can challenge. Agreed to train C&Q possibly in Spring term then can widen out.

AF thanked governors for their input to Ofsted consultation - it was sent.

Minutes approved.

Enrollment one L - FIND

4 Review of College QIP

Attendance: Attendance is currently higher than at the same point last year, though improvements have not met expectations. Ongoing efforts are in place to further boost attendance figures.

Retention: Retention has improved, standing at 93.4% compared to 91.5% at the same point last year. A Level retention for courses completing this year is particularly strong at 83.6%, reflecting a 5% increase. This is a positive indicator for anticipated summer achievement rates.

Value Added: Progress continues to be monitored closely. Support strategies have been implemented for students identified as underperforming. Interventions are tailored to the need—whether for individual students, small groups, or full cohorts. Gender Gap Focus remains on addressing the underperformance of female students compared to males. While earlier in the year female attendance and retention were lower, both have now improved.

4.1 Questions and discussion:

Q: Can we get underneath the reason why?

A: Have done work this year and discussion with the director of curriculum and curriculum groups to initially raise the problem . The initial focus shifted away from directly challenging attendance to reshaping the nature of conversations with students — moving towards a more supportive approach, asking "*How can we help you get to class?*" rather than "*Why weren't you in class?*"

Although the primary focus was on female students, this approach has been applied more broadly across the student body. Insights from the SFCA (Sixth Form Colleges Association) conference highlighted that national gender gaps exist, and one key takeaway was that even if staff do not immediately have a solution, awareness of the issue itself can lead to improved engagement and responsiveness.

There is a growing recognition of the importance of engaging quieter students — ensuring they are not overlooked and that they are following the teaching effectively. While there is no definitive answer yet for improving attendance, the emphasis is now on how we engage students, support them to remain on course, and address barriers — even when attendance is inconsistent.

Make assumptions that poorer attendance students will not achieve as well. There is a connection but not always true.

Q: Have you been able to do any analysis if it is all students or a small number?

A: There are key poor attenders. Some may 10% in the first few weeks then build up to 30% so making progress but it is still poor. Also the data then is affected for their whole year.

Work being done is positive for all students.

Q: Do you think data has been looked at in all ways possible?

A: Started a conversation and looked at it broadly which has started to have an impact in teachers behaviour but a lot more could be analysed. There are differences between faculties and curriculum areas which can be looked at more next year.

It may be interesting to look at percentages of female students from different schools in the local area and Hampshire. We also do not know their attendance from school. Do get this for students with additional needs as on their plan.

It would be interesting for this committee to hear more of this as it progresses. Likely to be kept on QIP next year as more work to follow on.

Shared with G&E before half term. Gives overview of staff development plan over the year. Covers INSET days, weekly sessions such as Greenlight classrooms, 15 minutes forums and opportunities available on an individual basis. INSET and forums are aimed towards teachers but there are ones for support staff too. July INSET day will be on AI and sessions for teaching and support staff.

- 5.1 A Governor had a comment they had a question on support staff and good to see they are included too.

Q: Do you inspire for all middle managers to go through the Wessex program?

A: No, it would be too expensive. A good number have over time. Can be most effective to bring someone in and offer bespoke training.

Q: Are you planning anything around the new Ofsted framework?

A: Yes, once known. Would start with directors of curriculum.

6 Student Survey

It was a positive student survey.

Fewer responses by 50. Similar approach than previously.

The comments are always interesting to read. Positive about what they enjoy about coming to College.

Areas for improvement - divided on food. Where College is busier, more need for quiet spaces and seating. Sometimes frustrating as getting comments would like to follow up but state that students can approach to discuss.

Q: Interesting comment about buses. Can we do anything when we do not know where it comes from?

A: Do get complaints about buses throughout the year so can see it is a frustration for students. When the College know about it or a particular issue, deal with it and contact the company when needed. It can be tricky as students get used to the bus system and how it works.

Comment from MJ: They have been brilliant during exams and have sent extra buses and kept College up to date.

Did look at the routes and how often the buses had been late. There is an adaptation that if the first part of the route is running late it then comes straight to college and the company deploys another bus which collects the students from the second part of route.

Next year the bus company will take complaints directly.

Q: Quiet spaces came up last year in the survey also. What can be done to improve?

A: There are areas that can be used. Easier in good weather as can spill outside. Short term encouraging students to make use of enrichment program which means they are in classrooms. Longer term will look at alongside the Estates strategy and maximising the spaces available in College.

Survey results has been shared with students and parents.

7 Parent Survey

Response Rate: The number of responses received is around half of the previous year's total. However, the quality of feedback has improved, with a greater proportion of parents selecting "strongly agree" and fewer indicating disagreement.

Parent feedback mirrors the positive trends seen in student surveys, suggesting a consistent perception of improvement across stakeholders. Parents highly value the weekly updates from the Principal, which are seen as informative and reassuring. Access to the parent portal continues to be a source of frustration for some. While not easily resolved, options are being explored to improve the user experience. Bus travel remains a concern for families due to the significant cost involved. This continues to be a point of frustration raised in feedback.

7.1 *Q: How did the response rate compare with Ofsted response rate?*

A: It was high for Ofsted. The College survey was sent a week later than usual so Principal did not have an opportunity to follow up.

Q: Cancelled classes and staff absence was issue last year, is it again?

A: Lessons may be cancelled but work is usually set. The biggest issue is two lessons a week levels for A level so it feels big if one lessons is cancelled. There is not a large pattern of this being an issue.

Q: Parents raising being taught by unqualified?

A: Do not know what it refers to and teachers are all qualified. It may be if someone has stepped in to cover a different area as niche subjects. Teachers can follow the lesson plan, support and structure when not a subject matter expert.

Q: Face to face parents evening mentioned once?

A: Moved away from parents evening into review days. Can see value in face to face but operationally get more engagement online as a lot of time for parents to come in. Just as valuable online as in person.

Some students do tell parents they do not need to attend these meetings so may need to consider how the messaging goes out.

8 Calendars and Terms of Reference

Suggestion to add to December meeting Ofsted framework and impact but as this is a one off rather than regular it could be covered.

Q: Would it be beneficial for governors to see the updates sent to parents?

A: Parent governors would see it so can send on to all governors. Will provide useful context. **AS action**

Changes

Report on College performance from external sources including any updates on context.

ToR - no changes, based on current Ofsted methodology which works well. Will review this.

Discussion on stating "student governor" on committee. Agreed would not want to narrow it.

9 Policy reviews, as required.

None.

10 AOB

None.

11 Date of next meeting – TBC