

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee on Wednesday 25th September 2025 from 1.15pm – 3.30pm via Microsoft Teams

39/25 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and she also extended a warm welcome to three applicants for the role of Student Governor who were joining the meeting as observers.

Apologies were received from Mr Dmytro Buyanov-Taylor and Mrs Teresa Gaudion.

The Chair thanked staff for preparing reports at this new earlier meeting in the year.

40/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

41/25 APPROVAL OF THE NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 30 APRIL 2025

The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held 25 September 2025 were approved as a true record.

42/25 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 30 APRIL 2025

The Director of Governance reported on Matters Arising. All items had been completed as detailed with the exception of the item on sharing information on the Accountability Statement for all staff which was scheduled for the first Staff Development Day of the academic year on 16 October 2025 with an accompanying piece for the staff newsletter, *In the Loop*.

The Committee were assured on Monitoring of actions and Matters Arising to September 2025.

43/25 HOL REPORT – ENGLISH AND MATHS ACHIEVEMENT

The Head of Learning – English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) joined the meeting and presented the report on English and maths achievement.

A Member noted the increased numbers of those taking exams and asked if the increase was expected or unexpected, and whether this led to issues with group size or curriculum delivery. The Head of Learning responded that the increase was expected and planned for, and that curriculum delivery had been focused on GCSE.

The Member, observing the pass rate, enquired whether students who did not feel they had a realistic chance of achieving grade 4 decided not to attend the exam. She asked whether any work had been undertaken with Student Voice whether students perceived achieving a grade 1 or 2 as a success versus a pass in Functional Skills. The Head of Learning responded that the aim was to get all students to grade 4 but also to convey that it was not a failure to achieve less and encourage a focus on incremental improvement. He acknowledged that it was hard to change culture in this respect. He added that there had been surveys regards Functional Skills and there had been an in-year change to entry level foundation learning which had been successful.

The Member commented that it would be interesting to see schools' data results to identify at what stage 'drift' occurred. She asked what was happening early on at primary stage. The Head of Learning responded that the College was mainly focused on the secondary stage but was obtaining more data to help to guide policy for this year.

The Head of Learning reported that there was a big debate nationally regarding Functional Skills and GCSE about what was best for students. There was a big jump to entry 3 from Functional Skills Level 1. The Member enquired regarding progression into Level 3 for those who didn't achieve, how this was managed and whether students were

able to progress. The Head of Learning confirmed that students were able to progress to Level 3. He added that students had not been restricted from enrolling in T Level courses and that the College was looking at bespoke classes. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) added that where T Level students did not meet entry requirements the curriculum areas were required to submit an exceptional entry form for sign off by the Assistant Principal with achievement for English or maths a requirement. The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) reported that there was a higher proportion of SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) students.

A Member, noting the decline in 16-19 critical learner achievement queried what the inhibiting factors were. The Head of Learning responded that he worked closely with the Head of Learning for High Needs and that tutors made adaptations. He reported that in summer 2025, 252 students had exam access arrangements and the College had managed to meet all needs successfully. He added that the College was passionate about making sure all students' needs were met where possible.

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) reported that the College was working with an external consultant on teaching, learning and assessment and that there was a need to look at provision delivery to ensure the College was achieving the right balance. The consultant was working with the College on swift recommendations and long-term actions and planning especially in English which had declined in the last two years but also maths which had declined last year.

The Chair thanked the Head of Learning for his report and she would welcome seeing grade outcomes and key changes in the year to come, and that the Committee would continue to monitor.

The Committee NOTED the report for ASSURANCE and ALERT to Corporation.

The Head of Learning departed the meeting.

44/25 BALANCED SCORECARD AND IN YEAR PROGRESS REPORT AND ACHIEVEMENT 24/25

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) presented the Balanced Scorecard and In-year Progress Report and Achievement for 2024/5.

A Member enquired regarding the changes to student enrolment and how this was working and being received. The Assistant Principal responded that there had been positive feedback from staff and students. 160-200 students were being enrolled daily with careers advice provided. Lanyards and identification were available immediately at the end of enrolment and an expectation was set that lanyards were needed at all times. This meant that it had been possible to conduct a lockdown test earlier this year than previously.

The Chair enquired as to any key staffing issues. The Assistant Principal responded that some areas had been able to recruit in advance. There was a current wait of 8-13 weeks for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and this was causing pressure. There were procedures to enable staff to start employment with a risk assessment completed where initial checks and references were clear but that these staff members had to be accompanied 24/7 whilst on-site. There were six staff currently affected. An agency was currently being used for engineering and in science there had been successful recruitment but the appointed person could not be released from a school setting until October. The College had used *FE Week* for recruitment and was also working with employers.

A Member enquired how the College compared with other colleges of the same size for enrolment. The Assistant Principal responded that on the Island the College's numbers were increasing or being maintained with sixth form numbers declining. She added that there was also a declining birth rate.

A Member commented that not all colleges were continuing to recruit where capacity had been reached especially where there were more SEND learners. The Assistant Principal responded that the College's increase in numbers correlated with the introduction of T Levels as an alternative to A Levels and that T Levels were gathering momentum. The College was continuing to enrol and there had been a very successful Open Evening. She reported

that 88% of those applying had enrolled before the start of the course so the team was not working on as many late application and enrolments as previously. She added that there were not many colleges that were a similar size to the College which was now a small college because of the number of other colleges that had merged.

A Member enquired whether there was an overall position for adult provision enrolment. The Assistant Principal responded that there was a staggered start for adult provision with the exception of ESOL. The Member asked if this was part of the ASF (Adult Skills Fund) allocation and the Assistant Principal confirmed that this was the case.

The Chair asked Members to consider any issues or gaps with the Balanced Scorecard. There was some discussion of the safeguarding measure. It was suggested that this was amended to record how quickly a safeguarding issue was dealt with and resolved. The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) confirmed that she would work with the safeguarding team on the measure.

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) reported that the 2024/25 outcome would come after the R14 hard close with targets and progress measures for the next meeting. The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) added that attendance for English and maths would also be added.

The Committee NOTED the report for ASSURANCE and ALERT to Corporation.

45/25 ACHIEVEMENT REPORT – CURRENT RECRUITMENT POSITION, GCSE/T-LEVEL RESULTS/CURRENT AND PREDICTED ACHIEVEMENT (ALL PROVISION)

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) presented the Achievement Report. She reported that the College was predicting an overall decline in achievement of 1.5% as a result of GCSE forecasts. She also reported that a slight decrease in adult achievement had been expected and that a number of students from 2023/24 had extended into 2024/25 of whom not all were engaged which accounted for the decline in adult achievement. However, it was still predicted that the College would come in-line with the national average. She also reported on retention as a factor, particularly in engineering and health. There had been some recruitment to apprenticeships by an employer which had affected retention and the College had raised this with the employer to encourage students to complete T Levels and progress onto an apprenticeship.

A Member commended the T Level achievement which she considered was not easy with complex assessments. She commented on the level 1 fluctuations. The Assistant Principal responded that this was connected with a change of policy regarding Functional Skills.

A Staff Governor observed the rise in apprenticeship achievement. The Assistant Principal responded that the College was very aspirational in this area and in particular had spent a great deal of time and focus on ensuring timely achievement and reducing the number of apprentices that were PPED (past planned end date). There had also been a change in the management structure for apprenticeships and she felt that the achievement rise was indicative that the changes made were having an impact as planned. In response to a query from the Staff Governor, the Assistant Principal reported that the College was below the national average for apprenticeship achievement but was on the right trajectory.

A Member asked whether for next year's report the level 1 and level 2 data could be pulled out in reporting separately to Functional Skills and GCSE. The Assistant Principal responded that this could be done using the dashboard.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her report and for all of the work at the College which was having a positive impact.

The Committee NOTED the report for ASSURANCE and ALERT to Corporation.

46/25 ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT AND POLICY

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) presented the Annual Safeguarding Report and Policy. She drew attention to next steps for the new Ofsted toolkit. She explained that safeguarding was now standalone rather than aligned with leadership and management and the grading assessment would be either met or not met. EDI (equality diversity and inclusion) considerations were being addressed with Heads of Learning Safeguarding Boards to ensure alignment of safeguarding and inclusion. She reported that both factors could be limiting grade factors in the new framework. She highlighted the importance of planning for teaching to neurodiversity so that all students could thrive. There was some variability across areas that needed to be addressed, she reported. She gave the example of considering how this translates for adults, apprentices, and for online learning. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) reported that a number of colleges were looking to appoint a Head of Inclusion.

A Member enquired regarding exclusions. The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) responded that there had been no exclusions and that the College always sought to put in place other options using disciplinary processes.

The Assistant Principal reported that wellbeing was a high category of incidence in safeguarding reporting and that the College was looking at how this could be managed across all teams. A Member commended the College's good community partnerships in this respect.

A Member enquired regarding the management of inappropriate behaviours where behaviour was as a result of a disability or unmet need, and whether this was being managed in a way that wasn't punitive. She asked if the College had confidence in this area. She observed that the College was already working towards restorative practice. The Assistant Principal responded that this was part of the updated Behaviour Policy which was on the agenda of this meeting (51/25). Staff and student feedback had been sought. She identified unmedicated ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) as an issue for low level behaviour incidences. She reported that this was not treated as an excuse but was a factor that had to be considered as part of a discipline meeting. Resource and training for staff on behaviour dynamics, trauma and de-escalation was provided, she reported. She reported that the Isle of Wight has the highest rate of exclusion in schools. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) added that this was a challenge but the College did see a turnaround in behaviour. The Member commended the College for bringing in external resource in this area.

Mrs Jessica Garbett joined the meeting at this point.

The Chair noted that changes for the Policy from *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) had been highlighted in the paper. The Designated Lead Governor for Safeguarding reported that she had reviewed the Policy and given interim approval for the beginning of term.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for the comprehensive report and all of the work that the College was doing in this area which was such an important aspect of College life.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and RECOMMENDED the Annual Safeguarding Report and the Safeguarding Policy for APPROVAL by Corporation.

47/25 OIA ANNUAL REPORT

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) presented the OIA (Office of the Independent Adjudicator) Annual Report. This concerned complaints related to higher education provision. The report provided assurance to Governors that the compliance procedure was being followed and that no COP (completion of procedures) letters had been issued during 2024 and none to date during 2025.

The Committee NOTED the report for ASSURANCE to Corporation.

48/25 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT AND COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) presented the Annual Complaints Report and the Compliments and Complaints Policy. She explained that this currently sat within her remit but may be moved with the recruitment of a Head of Quality. She reported that the College tried to resolve complaints at a lower level where possible. There had been one complaint during 2024/25 which had escalated to the highest level with the Chair of Corporation. The complaints procedure had been reviewed with the escalation process and timelines refined as presented in the updated Policy for consideration.

The Chair enquired whether the complaint escalated to the Chair had been resolved. The Assistant Principal responded that the complaint was closed from the College's perspective having completed the full process but that the complainant had the right to take their complaint to the DfE (Department for Education). The Chair enquired whether all other complaints in the last year had been resolved and the Assistant Principal confirmed that they had. She provided an overview of the complaints and their resolution.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and RECOMMENDED the Annual Complaints Report and the Compliments and Complaints Policy for APPROVAL by Corporation.

49/25 EDI SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) presented the EDI Report. She explained that the College was focused on moving from the outdated term EDI to inclusion in-line with the new Ofsted framework. She was meeting with the Designated Lead Governor for EDI/ SEND to review.

The Lead Governor for EDI/SEND commended the comprehensive report. She raised a query regarding offenders and retention. The Assistant Principal responded that the offending profile was checked and measures put in place at College, and that the College worked closely with the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) team. The Lead Governor observed that education provided a big opportunity for change for offenders.

The Chair commended the good foundation laid for the new changes on inclusion.

The Committee NOTED the report including progress against EDI objectives and key priorities for 2025/26 for ASSURANCE and ALERT to Corporation.

50/25 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE LEARNING POLICY

The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) presented the Annual Review of the Learning Policy 2025/26. The new Ofsted inspection framework was noted as a key area of change. She identified key themes for the Learning Policy: enhance the use of AI (artificial intelligence) by teachers and assessors to develop students' knowledge, skills and behaviour; effectively contextualise English and maths topics within vocational curriculum to consolidate learning and ensure progress in skills development; develop teachers range of comprehensive assessment methodologies for teaching that includes summative assessments, peer reviews, and self-assessment components tailored to all students and subject areas. These themes were the same as the previous year. It was intended that by maintaining these themes, the College aimed to create a robust framework that supports student and staff growth, and provides an exceptional learning experience. She outlined digital literacy as part of the new inspection framework. English and maths was a key area of focus. It was hoped that the impact of observations would be seen at the next round of observations.

The Chair enquired whether data could be input into Century. The Assistant Principal responded that there was a breadth of observation and assessment methods which was relevant for inclusion and these aimed to support teachers to improve the quality of lessons. There were some staff who still wanted written work but it was good to have a range to provide support to everyone going forward.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and RECOMMENDED the Learning Policy 2025/26 for APPROVAL by Corporation.

51/25 STUDENT BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) presented the Student Behaviour Policy. As reported earlier in the meeting (46/25) there were changes to levels of escalation, timeliness, and restorative behaviour measures. Student feedback had been sought via the Student Executive and coming from this wall wraps had been produced and put up around College which outlined highly effective learning habits. The Policy would be kept under annual review with further feedback sought and to consider how the Policy was addressing behaviour.

A Member enquired whether there was a staff behaviour policy. The Assistant Principal responded that there was a professional code of conduct.

A Member enquired what support was given to staff for behaviours in the classroom. The Assistant Principal responded that there was staff feedback on the effectiveness of processes and what staff would like to see. She reported that as a College behaviour was generally good and that whilst there was some disruption or 'backchat' that generally across the College students were courteous and respectful. She added that at this time last year there had been a number of serious incidences that had resulted in a security team being engaged. This team was still on site and helping to support behaviour on campus. She added that any students with additional needs also had support. The College was reviewing whether the security team was required in the long-term or whether a dedicated behaviour post was needed.

A Member commented that four weeks seemed a long time for someone to be out of learning. The Assistant Principal responded that this time period was to give the College sufficient timeframe to resolve but that this would normally be resolved as quickly as possible. She cited the example of cases involving the police, particularly where a police investigation was pending as impacting how quickly the College was able to complete the process. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) added that the majority of suspensions were for two days or a week to two weeks maximum. There had also been occasions where students had been able to attend a different campus to avoid breaching bail conditions. In these cases safety plans were in place.

A Member enquired about young people with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) and communication with the Local Authority regarding breakdown with placement. The Assistant Principal confirmed that she would amend the Policy to include this. She outlined the approach in this instance.

The Member enquired whether there were any behaviours that would lead to an automatic exclusion where they were serious and posed a safeguarding risk to others. The Assistant Principal responded that this had been included in the Policy previously but had been removed and instead behaviours including relating to knives, drug dealing, and gang recruitment would be moved to a gross misconduct stage but that factors around the student would be considered and therefore it was not as straightforward as automatic exclusion. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) gave the example of a student who possessed a lighter that that was a replica firearm. This student had been suspended and re-engaged. There were no specific non-negotiables and this was dealt with on a case by case basis. The Member commented that it was important to ensure a consistent approach but acknowledged that this was less challenging for a small college like the Isle of Wight College than it would be for a larger college. She added that effective oversight needed to be maintained.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and RECOMMENDED the Student Behaviour Policy for APPROVAL by Corporation subject to amendment outlined.

52/25 STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Assistant Principal (Education, Progress and Student Support) presented the Student Attendance Policy. The Chair welcomed the change to English and maths timetabling to improve attendance. The Assistant Principal reported that attendance was a national issue since COVID and that there were no official benchmarks. She reported that the AoC (Association of Colleges) had produced a report last year and the College was dipping below the average reported for colleges with English and maths 20% below. There was a real need to tackle attendance including from a safeguarding perspective. There were attendance and engagement officers and mentors to support

attendance particularly where there were concerns about the level of attendance. It was difficult once there was an established pattern and therefore the College worked hard on this to engage with students in the first six weeks. She reported that there were students who were working to support their families and therefore it was important to be aware of this. The College had arranged timetabling for three solid days of attendance so that there were two days free.

A Member commended the support for vulnerable students. She enquired how non-attendance was notified. The Assistant Principal responded that e-notify and alerts were used within 20 minutes of a lesson start and this was working effectively having been put in place last year.

A Member enquired whether the data had been analysed by course or level. The Assistant Principal responded that this had been undertaken and that there were some 'spiky' profiles. Factors had been identified last year and this had led to a major piece of work on timetabling. The Assistant Principal (Curriculum and Skills) added that one of the College's dashboards filtered student attendance data which was helpful for Heads of Learning and Teaching and Learning Managers.

The students present were asked whether they preferred the three day timetable and they confirmed that they did. One student commented that some students might not attend if they did not have a full timetable on a particular day. The Staff Governor reported that it did feel as though everyone was in at the same time and that this placed a pressure on space and resources. She reported that the LRC (Learning Resources Centre) was full Monday to Wednesday and that students might be turned away but empty on a Friday. However, she did recognise that the College felt more active and that she was escorting more students to English and maths lessons which was very positive.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and RECOMMENDED the Student Attendance Policy for APPROVAL by Corporation.

53/25 DRAFT 3AS REPORT TO CORPORATION

The Director of Governance explained that this would form the Committee's report to Corporation of those items that the Committee wished to alert Corporation to, assure Corporation on, and recommend for approval or action. The report would be drafted in consultation with the Chair and SLT (Senior Leadership Team) leads and circulated to Members for comment and approval prior to inclusion in the board pack.

54/25 SELF-ASSESSMENT OF MEETING

The Chair led Members in a self-assessment of the meeting. She asked Members whether moving to four meetings per year from three had made the agenda lighter. It was agreed that several policies had been considered and that the meeting had felt less pressured and enabled more opportunity for discussion. The Chair commented that the September date may need to be reviewed.

55/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

56/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

3rd December 2025