

Present: Sheena Payne-Lunn (Chair), Wisal Bashar, Elle Beale, Grahame Davies, Sean Devlin, Andrew Forth, Alex Gwinn, Paul Rushton, Caroline Shaw, Ed Senior and Larik Voitenko

In Attendance: Jane Jenkins (Vice Principal), Jo Payne (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

1. Apologies: Wisal Bashar, Wendy Pickess.

2. Standing Items

- (i) No interests were declared.
- (ii) No items were identified as confidential.
- (iii) No urgent business was identified.

3. Minutes

- (i) Minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee: 5th February 2025

The minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting were **confirmed** as a correct record. An update was provided on the action points with the Principal advising that there had been more diversity in recent staff appointments and the College continues to attempt to liaise with local groups. The Clerk advised that she would consider whether more qualitative targets for governors were appropriate when the Committee reviews its performance and targets in the autumn term.

4. Management and Strategic

- (i) Principal's Update

The Principal presented his update report and noted the following points:

- It is estimated that the College could have an additional 40 students next academic year, with a slight increase to the intake and good year 1 to year 2 rollover as a result of improved in-year retention. Whilst approved applications are currently running approximately 80 ahead of the equivalent point last year, the modest increase in the year 11 cohort was in schools with sixth forms with both Nunnery Wood High School and Blessed Edwards having a slightly smaller year 11 which may mean a lower application to enrolment conversion rate;
- There has been a lot of media coverage about the need to improve train travel from Worcester to Hereford to prevent students from studying at Hereford SFC from having their education adversely affected;
- The increase in numbers this year will positively impact funding next year which will help to ensure that the College can respond to any pay award above that budgeted, in particular, as the School Teachers' Review Body has recommended a pay award of 4% whereas the increase to core funding is 2.8%;
- There is concern at the dramatic increase in unconditional offers being made to students from the University of Worcester and others with 167 students in total being issued such an offer. There has been a meeting with David Green at the University of Worcester and a joint letter agreed going forward when such offers are made;
- The Worcestershire County Council Sufficiency report has been issued and identifies that South Worcester has experienced the highest migration rates and is also the area where most house building is planned which could be positive for the College;

- The introduction of IMPACT week is an attempt to respond to the need to get all students out on work placement. The programme of activities is focused on preparing students for progression in subject related ways and more generally and it is hoped they will engage positively with the activities organised. It also creates some gained time for teaching staff.

In response to challenge it was noted that:

- The Committee raised concerns at the seemingly predatory action of subsidising train travel from Worcester to Hereford and the Trust allowing its funds to be spent in this way which had the potential to undermine the reputation of the College. They also echoed concern that KEDST continue to send representatives to recruitment events at Blessed Edward;
- It is possible that in recent years as a result of the pandemic with the awarding of TAGs and CAGs that students had been less suited to the challenges of academic study at post-16 or less resilient. Retention from year 1 to year 2 has improved in the last year or two and perhaps improved in-year return was a return to pre-COVID times;
- The College has written to students with unconditional offers to emphasise the importance of achieving the best possible outcomes to ensure they are best placed in future competitive job markets;
- It is believed that the sufficient report is produced every three years, but this will be checked;
- The usual safeguarding checks undertaken for work experience placements would be in place or all IMPACT week work placements and that Unifrog was the platform being used to keep parents informed etc.

The Committee **noted** the report and commented that the IMPACT week programme was a brilliant programme of additional activity with great variety and governors looked forward to receiving feedback post-event.

5. Quality Assurance

(i) Quality Assurance

The Vice Principal presented the key aspects of her report and highlighted the following:

- Attendance is slightly better than last year after a slight dip in the second half of the autumn term. It was disappointing that Level 2 attendance was not as strong as all of the same actions which appeared to bring about improvement last year have been repeated. This year there has been a move to conduct face to face interviews with Level 2 students looking to progress onto Level 3 programmes next year and consideration is being given as to whether the ability of senior staff to meet these students earlier might have an impact on attendance and aspiration etc;
- Progress of students is being monitored in year with data from summary assessments being analysed in value added terms to check that the assessments being set by teachers were suitably challenging. The use of a new tool, Sisra, which is more user friendly than ALPS will hopefully further support in this monitoring and challenge. It is also uses a methodology more closely aligned to the Level 3 Value Added data which is published;
- The College invited colleagues from Richard Huish to participate in a review of our Applied curriculum with a particular focus on behaviour, the rigour of assessment and teaching and learning. The College's applied provision is strong with value added of 0.17 – the highest in the Trust and much higher than other Worcester providers. The review found lots of strengths, but also identified a lack of consistency in the challenging of behaviour. This will be a focus of training in the summer with specific training for applied teachers. A new Raising Standards Lead with a focus on applied courses has also been appointed.

In response to challenge it was noted that:

- There are approximately 90 students on a Level 2 programme. The curriculum was designed to carefully map progression from Level 2 onto Level 3 courses and there were no current plans to change the GCSE offering;

- The improvement in retention is possibly the result of the efforts of the pastoral team at the end of year 1 to ensure students were on the right programme of study;
- In relation to Business Level 2 progression, the specification has been changed to the Business and Marketing which it is hoped is more engaging for students with the result being improved retention;
- As a Trust, all colleges have used ALPS previously and are now experimenting with Sisra so that benchmarking is possible. Six Dimensions would continue to be used to evaluate value added after the results in the summer;
- The applied review consisted of lesson observations, interviews etc, but the College does not review all teaching via formal lesson observations. The quality assurance process is ongoing with self-assessment reports and quality improvement plans produced with in-year monitoring against the targets set and a developmental and coaching approach to visiting lessons as part of the work of the teaching and learning team.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

6. Governance

The Clerk presented her report and noted that Sean Devlin, James Adnett and Matthew Adams were all approaching the end of the term of office, but had said that they would be willing to continue for another term.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

- To re-appoint Sean Devlin as external governor and member of the Curriculum and Quality Committee for a four-year term;
- To re-appoint Matthew Adams as external governor and member of the Finance and Resources Committee for a four-year term;
- To re-appoint James Adnett as external governor and member of the Finance and Resources Committee for a four-year term.

7. Annual Reports

(i) Safeguarding

The annual safeguarding report produced by the Senior Leader for Safeguarding/DSL and Safeguarding Officer was received. The Principal noted the following points:

- The new Mental Health and Wellbeing Officer was making an excellent contribution to the support offered for students alongside the counselling provision. The College had been able to appoint a new Counsellor following the resignation of the individual currently in post;
- The College has worked with the local health protection team on a project relating to vaping. Students were surveyed and responses suggest that 15% of respondents vape, but that the perception of how many of their peers did so was much higher. The pastoral team continue to educate on the dangers of vaping and there will be a follow up survey hopefully to demonstrate impact of the project;
- The new designated safeguarding governor has completed DSL and Safeguarding Governor training which is positive.

In response to challenge the following was noted:

- It was understood that the suggestion in recent training that there should be a designated attendance governor and a deputy safeguarding governor and that policies and audits should be signed by the Local Governing Body was a requirement for schools rather than colleges, but this will be checked;
- Governors requested more feedback on whether different categories appeared proportionate in number to the overall cohort;
- The College uses Smoothwall to monitor keystrokes etc and was also piloting ClassCloud which enables teachers to monitor computer activity of a whole class and to manage usage;

- It will be checked whether reporting a number below 10 in various categories was appropriate if it meant that they could possibly be identified.

The Committee thanked the authors for such a comprehensive report and **noted** the contents.

(ii) Learning Support

The Committee received the annual Learning Support report. The Principal noted the increase in the number of students requiring special exam arrangements with the suggestion from schools data that this would increase still further. The Committee enquired if there was a reason for this and the Principal suggested a possible increase in the increase in identification and diagnosis of learning support needs that require access arrangements. There was also some discussion on the impact of mobile phones and the move of some schools to ban smartphones and smartwatches entirely.

Whilst the number of students receiving access arrangements was available, the Committee noted its interest in how many students had applied for access arrangements which were rejected.

The Committee thanked the Learning Support Manager for such a comprehensive report and **noted** the contents.

(iii) Student Union

The summary of the efforts of the Student Union this academic year were **noted** with thanks.

8. **Policy Reviews**

(i) Complaints Policy

The Committee **approved** the policy with the minor change as outlined.

Entries in the complaints and concerns register were considered and the following points were noted:

- There have been a few more concerns than has been typical from members of the public, predominantly residents, in relation to parking or driving on Spetchley Road and behaviour at the bus stop, for example. The Principal met with the Nunnery City Councillor, Elaine Willmore, and a collaborative letter co-signed by the College, the City Councillor and the Police has been agreed and will be circulated to residents. The aim of this is to advise residents of their rights and who to contact and also to outline what the College can do to identify students etc.
- There had been one complaint to the Local Governing Body where a disciplinary outcome was not appealed but about which the parents wished to complain about the process. The Chair of the Local Governing Body spoke to relevant staff and communicated his decision to the complainants.

In response to challenge the following was noted:

- The College responded to concerns about the lack of parents' evening appointment availability through departments opening up a year 2 parents' evening to year 1 parents as well. Going forward, following consultation with a working party, the College is going to trial

identifying four dates (two in the autumn, two in the spring) where teachers must attend two that are publicised with parents and then identify when they will make other appointments available.

The Committee **noted** the contents of the complaints register.

(ii) Admissions and Fitness to Study

The Committee **approved** the policy with the minor change as outlined.

Closing Standing Items

- (i) Risk Management: The Committee's discussion in relation to parking, use of smartphones and challenge around the College's requirements re designated governor roles and sign off will be considered in reviewing the risk register.
- (ii) Impact: The Committee's scrutiny of safeguarding and learning support arrangements, in addition, to quality assurance was noted as ensuring that students receive the best possible support and provision.
- (iii) Any Urgent Business: No items were raised.
- (iv) Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 6th November 2025

The meeting finished at 7.05pm.

Signed:.....
Sheena Payne-Lunn (Chair)

Date:.....

CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE: ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 14TH MAY 2025

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
C&Q/14.05.25/4(i)	Confirm how often sufficiency planning is reported on by the Council.	JJP	November 2025	
C&Q/14.05.25/7(i)	Clarify points raised by the safeguarding governor following recent training namely whether an attendance and deputy safeguarding governor is required, whether policies need to be signed by governors and whether numbers reported in differing categories are proportionate to the size of the cohort.	EYS/JJP	ASAP	
C&Q/14.05.25/7(i)	Check on GDPR compliance in relation to reporting on numbers less than 10.	JJP	November 2025	

C&Q/14.05.25/7(ii)	Report back on how many students had applied for access arrangements which were rejected.	EYS/JJP	November 2025	
--------------------	---	---------	---------------	--

ACTION POINTS CARRIED FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
C&Q/06.11.24/7	Consider whether governor performance could also be measured qualitative as well as quantitatively, for example, identifying the areas where governors identify that their challenge has been focused	JJP	November 2025*	

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
C&Q/05.02.25/5(i)	Review teaching questionnaire and consider amending the question in relation to work set outside of lessons.	JLJ	Summer 2025	✓
C&Q/06.11.24/6(i)	Consider means of engaging with local communities teams with a view to improving diversity among the staffing and governing bodies.	EYS	Ongoing	✓

*denotes change