

GOVERNOR SERVICES: EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

ASHTON COMMUNITY SCIENCE COLLEGE (06104)

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum, Standards, Personnel and Student Welfare Committee held in school on Wednesday, 7 May 2025 at 4.30pm

Present:

Mr M Catterall (Chair)
Mr W Clarke
Mr S Fern
Mrs R Gordon
Mrs J Hoyle
Mr O Mollart - joined remotely
Honorary Alderman, Mr B Rollo
Miss S Asquith (Headteacher)

Also Present:

Mrs J Burbidge (Governing Body Adviser)

Governors were welcomed to the meeting.

ACTION

25.13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr D Maddox.

Governors noted the absence of Mr J Swindells and Mr D Hird.

Mrs Gordon confirmed that she had now joined the committee.

25.14 Declaration of Interests

The headteacher declared an interest with her brother providing drainage services to the school and Mrs Gordon declared that her child was involved in one the clubs that was due to be discussed during the meeting.

It was agreed that if a conflict of interest arose, these governors would leave the meeting.

25.15 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday, 29 January having been circulated, were approved as a correct record and the chair was asked to arrange for the minutes to be signed electronically via GovernorHub.

Chair**25.16 Matters Arising from the Minutes****a) Maths information (minute 25.06 refers)**

It was noted that the IDSR had been distributed at the last full governing body meeting and Mrs Hoyle offered to circulate the feedback from the RAP meetings to governors.

Mrs Hoyle**25.17 Analysis of School Performance Data**

Mrs Hoyle presented her written analysis of school performance and exam predictions which had previously been circulated to governors.

Governors were reminded of how the current Year 10 and 11 pupils had not taken the end of KS2 tests and that as a result of this, how no national progress data would be available, and how the school had created its own approach to help monitor the progress of pupils.

Mrs Hoyle explained how tiering currently effected Maths, Modern Foreign Languages and Science, and how the school was trying to get a consistency with teaching Higher tier grades, and how a final decision on the tiers of entry would be made in the Spring term of Year 11 when the exam entries were made.

Reference was made to the Year 11 DC2 data from March 2025, which was based on the January mock exams, and Mrs Hoyle summarised how the data showed the percentage of pupils predicted to be on or above the target grade in the vocational subjects, and the value-added scores for the GCSE subjects.

Mrs Hoyle pointed out the importance of the progress showing the value added and how this had all been monitored and reviewed with the Heads of Department through the line management structure.

Governors were informed of how the revision sessions were ongoing and Mrs Hoyle commended the significant amount of work the staff had done to provide this support.

Mrs Hoyle drew governors attention to the summary of the Year 10 DC1 data, and how this provided an indication on whether students were predicted to be on track to meet their target grades, with the proviso that this data was collected halfway through Year 10 and a quarter of the way through the GCSE courses, and was based on staff professional judgements.

A governor commented on the variation between the Maths prediction of 41% and the Physics prediction of 91%, and Mrs Hoyle explained how this was largely due to the differences in cohorts which would distort the figures, how the Maths Department also tended to be very cautious, and how it was hoped that the numbers of pupils on track to meet the target grades would continue to increase. Additionally, Mrs Hoyle also described how discussions were currently taking place to investigate ways in which more precise data could be gathered in Year 10.

Mr Fern demonstrated how Maths was also quite cumulative with the content being taught compared to other subjects, and reiterated how the Maths Department were generally very cautious with their predictions.

Mrs Hoyle repeated how collecting the grade information next year would help to provide a more accurate picture, and in response to a comment from a governor, described how the school was in a very difficult position with not having the prior attainment data. Mrs Hoyle explained how the school had looked at the CAT test scores, but how there was no national benchmarking available.

Mrs Hoyle recapped on the monitoring that was being done with the current Year 10 and 11, and how the school was mindful that the Year 10 data might potentially be the last set of data before the school was next inspected by Ofsted, and how this data needed to be favourable.

Mrs Hoyle demonstrated how the school was also looking at the number of pupils achieving the headline measures in English and Maths and how these were also continuing to be closely monitored.

Governors were informed of how there were programmes of interventions in place to address some of the previous underachievement, with targeted interventions for specific grades or specific pupils, and how next year the intention was for two members of staff to deliver form time interventions in Maths.

Reference was made to the information on the schools Reading Strategy and Mrs Hoyle described how this was a key area of focus in school. Governors noted the percentages of pupils who were not functionally literate in each year group and for the Disadvantaged pupils in each year group. It was noted that this report had been colour coded to indicate the progress made and included the actions to be embedded in school which included a review and relaunch of the Reading curriculum.

A governor commented on how the non-Pupil Premium pupils on the Reading profile were all highlighted in red and Mrs Hoyle explained how this was due to an increase in the numbers of pupils who had not met the functional literacy levels.

In answer to a further question, Mrs Hoyle indicated how this could possibly be due to some of the interventions that had been taking place and was something the school was further exploring at the moment.

25.18 Curriculum Update

Mrs Hoyle presented her curriculum update report, which had previously been circulated to governors.

Governors were informed of how the Year 9 Options process had gone well and how the EBacc uptake had continued to increase, with 33% of pupils opting for the EBacc and Mrs Hoyle suggested how this was also where the strong subjects were in school too.

Mrs Hoyle advised how the Alternative Provision was an area the school had continued to develop to ensure that pupils were in school and accessing the curriculum including the pupils with EHCP's and medical needs.

It was noted that a number of GCSE exams had already taken place that the main exams started this Friday afternoon, and that the schools offer had continued to increase, with 23 different GCSE's being offered with 73 different papers.

Governors were informed of how some pupils were not doing the full quota of eight GCSE's and Mrs Hoyle highlighted the various reasons for this. Additionally, how this would also have a negative impact on the schools Progress 8 measures.

Governors were asked to note how two pupils would be included in the headline figures despite no longer being on roll and how this would have an immediate loss of 16 GCSE grades.

Mrs Hoyle provided a summary of the subject updates and departmental Quality Assurance (QA). It was reported how there was a small amount of inconsistency with the QA which the school needed to work on with some colleagues.

Reference was also made to the various department updates.

A governor commented on how the department updates had been very useful and interesting, and provided an insight in terms of the Quality of Education in school. Mrs Hoyle was requested to feed these comments back to staff.

Mrs Hoyle highlighted the Teaching and Learning update which had been provided by Mrs Pilkington, assistant headteacher and the Teaching and Learning lead, which indicated the current strengths and areas for development. It was noted that the seven ECT's were all doing well at the moment.

Mrs Hoyle

Mrs Hoyle also referred to the Personal Development update and how the schools had continued to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks. It was noted that meetings were taking place to ensure that pupils were getting appropriate careers advice and guidance and Mrs Hoyle provided an overview of the Scholar's Club and Year 10 Oxford University trip.

Mrs Hoyle highlighted the plans to run a Year 9 taster day at Preston College later in the year, how PSHE / SMSC was continuing to be delivered, and the adaption to the Form Time schedule which included revision strategies and interventions for all year groups.

In response to a comment from a governor, Mrs Hoyle further described the revision strategies and resources to be used in Years 7 to 10.

Governors attention was drawn to the SEND update and the current SEND profile of the school.

Governors were reminded of the significant impact and benefits of the BUD provision, and how this was being used for mainstream, speech, language and communication needs, deaf students and for nurture. Mrs Hoyle explained how in the past four different curriculums had been delivered, and how by grouping students from the different provisions, how this had allowed staffing resources to be maximised and curriculum opportunities enhanced.

It was reported that there were currently four additional pupils in Year 9 linked to the SLCN unit on non-commissioned places, and how the school was also looking at the KS4 curriculum pathways.

Mrs Hoyle provided an overview of the different curriculum pathways, the number of pupils involved in each pathway and how the curriculum was tailored to meet these student's needs.

Reference was made to the update on interventions and impact, and the number of Year 11 revisions sessions and pupils involved.

It was noted that revision sessions were to continue to be delivered during the May half term closure, and how the Diggery continued to be a very successful intervention for a number of reasons.

Mrs Hoyle highlighted the summary of interventions and the success rates, and explained how attendance remained the biggest issue to achieving successes.

Governors noted the update on Educational Visits provided by Mr Fern, and the summary of visits planned for the Summer term.

The summary of the school profile was also noted, which included the IDACI index, and the number of pupils from the most deprived to least deprived neighbourhoods.

The chair expressed thanks to the teachers for providing the additional revision sessions, and commended the continued increase in the number of pupils attending these sessions.
Mrs Hoyle was requested to convey this gratitude to the staff.

Mrs Hoyle

Mrs Hoyle was thanked for all of her reports and updates.

25.19 Student Update

Mr Clarke provided a student update which included an update on attendance.

Mr Clarke highlighted how the school was now also using the DfE attendance data alongside the FFT data.

Governors were informed of how the DfE was producing more accurate school comparison to national averages, and how both sets of data helped to provide a breakdown in different areas of focus however not all schools had signed up to the FFT.

Mr Clarke pointed out how the schools overall attendance was above national average and that the Persistent Absence was below the national average. Additionally, how there had been a year-on-year improvement in the overall attendance rates compared to the national averages over the last 2.5 years, and that the school was also positive in comparison to the national averages by different pupil groups.

Mr Clarke summarised how this progress was due to the successful implementation of the schools approach and work with attendance over the last few years, and that although attendance had improved, how it was the schools aspiration to raise overall attendance to 97%.

It was reported that further work was planned to continue to reduce absenteeism, which included an external audit, which would result in a strategic plan to build on this year's progress.

The chair enquired whether attendance at the end of March historically dipped similarly to November, and governors were informed of how attendance generally dipped in the weeks before any of the longer holiday periods, with families starting their holidays slightly earlier.

Mr Clarke described the improvements with communication going out to parents on a regular basis, which included the attendance language and how the school was consistent in its approach and followed the Governments guidelines. It was reported that the local authority generally fined families quite quickly for taking holidays, and how it took longer to build up the portfolio of evidence for persistent absenteeism.

Governors were asked to be mindful of how a similar dip in attendance was expected the week before the end of the Summer term, and governors were reminded of how the pupils were taught right up to the end of each term.

Following a discussion, the headteacher explained how the school did try to include rewards with the reward assemblies and a Sports Fest in the Summer term, and in response to a comment from a governor, how the school had worked hard to change the mentality with continuing to work right up to the end of term.

After further discussion, Mr Clarke reiterated how parents typically thought it was best to tag time onto a longer school holiday rather than take separate time off school and how the numbers were continuing to reduce compared to the national averages.

A governor enquired whether the improvement in attendance had made any measurable impact on the pupils learning, and Mr Fern described how a notable impact had been seen in the classroom, with the pupils who were consistently attending school doing better than their peers.

Governors were informed of how the culture of the pupils was also significantly different compared to previous, with 70% of Year 11 pupils voluntarily attending the After School and Easter revision sessions this year, how the pupils aspirations had changed and how pupils recognised the impact of education more.

A governor referred to the performance data and the percentage of Year 11 pupils at Age Related Expectations compared to previous, and how this was testament to all of the hard work in school.

Mr Clarke presented the student report on in school behaviour and reminded governors of the schools warning system and basic expectations.

Mr Clarke described how it was very pleasing to see the impact of the new behaviour system with the constant decline in the amount of times and the number of students disrupting learning or being removed from lessons. However, the school was still not where it wanted to be, but was on the journey to reducing this further. Similarly, the internal exclusions and repetitive behaviour had also declined over the last two years, which was enabling pupils to receive the support they needed earlier.

A governor questioned whether there was any QA for teacher's giving sanctions and to ensure the behaviour levels in school remained the same, and Mr Clarke pointed out the number of non-negotiables and expectations which were in place in school and how these hadn't waived additionally how staff were generally more "finicky" and consistent with the schools policy.

The headteacher highlighted the increase in the non-negotiable detentions and how mobile phones had not been banned in 2021/22, and how pupils now knew the certainty of a follow up in the event of failing to meet the non-negotiable expectations.

The headteacher demonstrated how the school was also demanding more of the students, and how these demands were reflected in the increased number of non-negotiables.

Mr Fern summarised how a lot of support was also available to the pupils to avoid any sanctions, and the headteacher described how the school was trying to prepare pupils and support them in becoming more independent and organised.

The chair questioned whether the majority of the non-negotiable detentions for 2024/25 had been before Christmas, and Mr Clarke described how there had been a consistent increase this year in the number of non-negotiable sanctions due to the school having a particular focus each week on uniform, equipment, routines etc. It was noted that the pupils were pre-warned of the schools expectations and how the Ashton Way was also discussed.

The headteacher provided an example with a lot of Year 11 pupils wearing make-up and jewellery and having additional piercing, and how a lot of the issues were anecdotal and potentially linked to the long-term absence of the Head of Year.

Additionally, Mr Fern pointed out how there was also a lot of seasonality with the non-negotiable sanctions.

A governor enquired how many non-negotiable sanctions could be issued before a pupils behavioural issues were progressed further and how pupils from difficult backgrounds were managed.

Mr Clarke demonstrated how the school had a dedicated Pastoral Team which continuously monitored pupils to identify any emerging trends, which then ensured timely intervention, and how the school then provided tailored support to help pupils overcome any barriers to the school's non-negotiable standards and expectations.

Mr Clarke described how it was sometimes difficult to "negotiate this path" and provided an example of the support the school was providing one particular pupil to overcome any potential barriers throughout the school day.

It was reported how the other pupils were constantly reminded, and Mr Clarke recapped on how the issuing of any behaviour sanctions was very much done on an individual and year group-based approach.

Mr Clarke illustrated how the relationships with parents also varied regarding the issuing of behaviour sanctions and supporting the schools basic rules and expectations, and the headteacher outlined how the non-negotiable detentions were not cumulative and the impact of the Head of Year reviewing any issues and contacting parents if needed.

In response to a further question, it was clarified how a pupil could only get a set number of detentions before the school stepped in with some more serious intervention and discussions about behaviour management and how the issues could be reset.

Mr Clarke described how he was proud of the number of suspensions returning to pre-pandemic levels, which was a significant achievement for the school, and how the school was continuing to reduce this trend.

It was noted that the number of exclusions were also reducing, and how this evidenced the impact of the improvement in conduct and behaviour in school.

Mr Clarke repeated how the numbers of suspensions and exclusions were showing a general decline, and that it was hoped that this would continue to reduce.

Mr Clarke provided an overview of the next steps and future plans, which included a significant review of the schools detention system and the ARC and possibly moving some after school detentions to lunchtimes.

A governor raised a question regarding the same day detentions and having no ability to inform their child about a lunchtime detention. The headteacher explained how pupils would be informed on Synergy and how there was a format of issuing any sanctions. Mr Clarke further described how same day detentions were given for any issues occurring before lunch, and that any detentions after lunch would be for the following day.

In response to a further question regarding how pupils that had specific needs, anxieties or mental health issues, responded to any same day detentions, Mr Clarke explained how pupils Individualised Learning Plans would provide guidelines for staff to follow and the importance of having a format to rebuild any relationships between staff and pupils and to provide a fresh start for pupils. Additionally, Mr Clarke described how the Individual Learning Plans were based on work with the Attendance Team or SEND Department to provide any reasonable adaptations to ensure a fair and consistent procedure for all pupils.

Mr Clarke provided an overview of the student report pastoral and safeguarding update which included a report on the Student Council and Senior Student Leaders, this terms Big question regarding the use of the Diggery and the schools Boost extracurricular programme. Mr Clarke described how there had been a significant increase in the Year 7 pupils accessing these sessions compared to other year groups, and how it was hoped that this would continue to increase more in the Summer term.

The headteacher highlighted how she was sympathetic with Year 11 being unable to attend many of the extracurricular clubs due to prioritising attending the additional revision sessions.

It was reported that the Duke of Edinburgh scheme was continuing, with the practice walks due to start next week and the Bronze expedition in July.

Reference was made to the schools Cultural Diversity Day which had been very successful, and Mr Clarke commended the amount of hard work and effort by staff, parents and pupils.

A governor suggested that the school could provide a slideshow or more pictures of any of the schools events, and all governors were invited to attend the next culture day.

The headteacher also described how the footfall for the Cultural Diversity Day had been very high and that over half the school had attended the event.

A governor enquired whether any consideration had been made to support visitors to the event who might require ear defenders, and the headteacher demonstrated how next year's event would be restructured in a bigger area to help mitigate noise levels and better accommodate such needs.

All governors were invited to attend the end of year Celebration Evening on Thursday 10 July.

All to note

Governors attention was drawn to the safeguarding update, and Mr Clarke highlighted the hard work by Ms Parkinson, the DSL to build up relationships with the Family Support Worker for District 6 which allowed staff to discuss more complex cases and receive advice on the best support they could provide families.

It was reported that Ms Parkinson had also been working with the ICT Network Manager, to ensure that the school was more than compliant with the Firewall and the filtering and monitoring system in school.

Mr Clarke summarised how there had been a significant increase in number of very complex safeguarding cases, which had included three cases in the last academic year where the school had been required to provide statements to the Police or attend court. Mr Clarke reiterated how this was a significant increase, and that all three cases had been related to sexual behaviour.

Mr Clarke pointed out how the school had received 16 Police safeguarding referrals over a three-week period, and how the Police were also expecting the school and the DSL's to take on more responsibilities which the Police would have done themselves previously.

Reference was also made to the Managed Transfer Tracker for the current academic year.

Mr Clarke was thanked for his very comprehensive reports which the chair suggested were the best ever.

25.20 Staffing Update

The headteacher provided a verbal update on staffing.

It was reported that there were currently eight vacancies in school:

2 x Teachers

2 x Cover Supervisors

2 x TA2

1 x Family Liaison Officer

1 x Casual Lettings Staff

The headteacher described how the school had made one offer for a teaching post today, and had recruited to the two Cover Supervisor vacancies.

Governors were informed that in terms of new appointments, one new member of staff was due to start in school on 2 September to replace the outgoing Head of Year 10, and how a handover period would be provided and that other new members of staff were also due to start in September.

The headteacher summarised how there was currently one member of staff on long term absence, who was being covered by supply, how three members of staff had returned from long term sick, and that two staff disciplinary meetings were due to take place tomorrow.

The headteacher was thanked for her report.

25.21 Educational Visits

It was noted that a report had been received from Mr Fern as part of the Curriculum update on 13 recent educational visits in relation to the impact and benefits and the essential curriculum knowledge, enrichment, and cultural capital these visits had provided.

Mr Fern reported details of the proposed educational visit to Turbary House Fishery on 2, 9 and 16 June 2025 for a group of pupils from Years 7 to 9, which was considered and approved by governors.

25.22 Policies and Procedures

Governors reviewed and approved the following policies:

a) Self-Evaluation Policy

It was confirmed that there had been no amendments to this policy, and Mrs Hoyle was requested to update the control sheet with the date of creation and overview of amendments.

Mrs Hoyle

b) Remote Learning Policy

It was noted that no amendments had been made to this policy.

c) Staff Dress Code Policy

The headteacher described how this policy had always been in place, and provided an overview of the amendments that had been made to the policy.

d) Swimming Policy

Governors were informed of the plans to shelve the Swimming Policy as swimming was no longer taking place or within the curriculum plans, and how this policy could be made live again if Swimming returned to the GCSE PE curriculum.

25.23 Confidentiality

Governors were reminded that **all** matters discussed at committee meetings were not for general discussion outside the meeting especially any staffing updates.

The committee considered whether any items discussed were required to be recorded in the minutes as confidential; that is, that should not be made available to the general public should a request be received to view governing body papers

For the purpose of the minutes, it was agreed there were no items deemed confidential.

25.24 Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was noted that the schedule for future meeting dates would be presented for approval at the next full governing body meeting.

Governors were thanked for their attendance and input and the meeting closed at 5.40pm.



GOVERNOR SERVICES: EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT

ASHTON COMMUNITY SCIENCE COLLEGE (06104)

CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum, Standards, Personnel and Student Welfare Committee held in school on Wednesday, 29 January 2025 at 4.30pm.

25.08 Staffing

The headteacher provided governors with a verbal update on staffing and reported that there had been:

- 3 x resignations (2 x TA's and a Student Receptionist)
- 3 x long term sickness absences (a TA with stress linked reasons, an IT Technician with depression and a receptionist)
- 3 x phased returns from absence (a Receptionist, PE Teacher and a member of the Behaviour Team)
- 1 x immediate full return from absence (a cleaner following a shoulder replacement had made a full, immediate return to work)
- 1 x new starter commencing in the next couple of weeks (Student Receptionist after half term)
- 1 x new starter commencing in September (Appointment of Mrs Hodgkinson in Food and Nutrition who was due to take up post in September 2025)
- 1 x colleague on shared parental leave (Head of Maths which was being covered by Mr Fern)
- 2 x maternity leave (one due to return on 24 February and one due to return on 17 March)
- 2 x vacancies being advertised (English advert and TA advert due to go live this week)