



**MINUTES OF THE REIGATE LEARNING ALLIANCE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY  
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 04 JUNE 2019 AT 16.30**

**Present:** Ms Pat Frankland (Chair) - LGB Member  
Ms Yvette Robbins - LGB Member  
Mr Chris Whelan - Chief Executive Officer & LGB Member  
Mr Nick Clark - Principal & LGB Member  
Mr Martin Beard - LGB Member  
Mr Soli Tarazi - LGB Parent Member  
Mr Mike Horgan - LGB Staff Member  
Ms Julie Heard - LGB Staff Member  
Mr Adaam Wallis - LGB Student Member  
Ms Rebecca Griffen - LGB Student Member

**In attendance:** Mr Jon Allen - Clerk

**1 WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Reigate Learning Alliance Governing Body. Welcomes and introductions were made to the newly appointed student Governors, Adaam Wallis and Rebecca Griffen.

**2 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Sarah Walters.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Pat Frankland, Chris Whelan, Yvette Robbins, and Nick Clark declared an interest in being members of the Reigate Trust Board.

**4 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting held 04 March 2019 were received and approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**5 SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING**

All action points on the Summary Action List are addressed through agenda items at this meeting. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**6. CAREERS BRIEFING**

Governors received from Ellen Walkinshaw a briefing on what the College is now required to do with regard the Gatsby Benchmarks for careers education. The Gatsby Benchmarks were confirmed as follows:

<b>A Stable Careers Programme</b> – Every college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by learners, parents, teachers, employers and other agencies
<b>Learning from Career and Labour Market Information (LMI)</b> - Every learner, and parents should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information
<b>Addressing Needs of Each Pupil</b> - Advice and support need to be tailored to needs of each learner. A college’s careers programme should embed equality and diversity throughout.
<b>Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers</b> - All subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers, even on courses which are not specifically occupation-led.
<b>Encounters with Employers and Employees</b> - Every learner should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and skills valued in workplace
<b>Experiences of Workplaces</b> - Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience.
<b>Encounters with FE and HE</b> - All learners should understand the full range of opportunities that are available including both academic and vocational routes.
<b>Personal Guidance</b> - Every learner should have opportunities for guidance interviews with (qualified) careers adviser.

As the College was required to provide a comprehensive careers education to its students, Governors asked if additional resources were being made available from the funding agency to meet the increased costs in making available such a level of careers education that was expected from the Gatsby Benchmarks. It was confirmed that no extra resources are being made available and the increased costs has to be funded by the College. Although the Gatsby Benchmarks are not statutory, Ofsted will make a judgment in any inspection on the careers education provided by the College. The College also has a morale duty to provide a comprehensive careers education to its students.

Governors applauded the approach being taken by the College.

## 7. NEW LESSON OBSERVATION SYSTEM

The focus of the report was to outline the pilot scheme for the proposed new lesson observation system.

The current lesson observation system at Reigate College consists of members of College Board and Learning Champions carrying out full lesson observations for each member of the teaching staff once every 2 years.

The current system has been in place for several years and whilst there were many benefits from observations, it was felt that the focus is too much on quality assurance and not enough on staff development. The infrequency of the observations made them feel very “high stakes” and meant that targets can be difficult to follow up. Although the Head of Department receives a copy of the written record, they are not involved in the observation. As a result, Lesson Observations, Department Reviews and Appraisal do not feel sufficiently “joined up”.

The views of teaching staff were discussed and collated during staff inset. This was a move away from the current model.

- There was a strong feeling that the purpose of lesson observations should be to encourage the development of teaching and learning rather than a judgement of a single lesson. As a result, there was a suggestion that the name be changed.
- There was significant support for peer observation to encourage the sharing of good practice, although some staff would like to have SLT input.
- There was a strong feeling that any observation process should not involve large amounts of paper work (if any).
- Consultation with union reps held.

Four courses/departments took part in a pilot peer observation scheme involving teaching staff, Head of Department and A/DoL in 2018-19 to consist of;

- An initial meeting with the teaching team and HoD to
  - identify the lesson focus e.g. starters, plenaries, questioning group work. This could be an area that the member of staff wished to develop, or an area that they want to showcase
  - arrange observation pairs or triangles
- A 20 minute lesson observation per teacher between October ½ term and Christmas
- A feedback meeting to discuss the teaching and learning observed and agree developmental targets/actions with teaching staff, HoD and A/DoL
- A second 20 minute lesson observation per teacher between Christmas and Easter
- A second feedback meeting to discuss the teaching and learning observed, reflect on progress and agree any further developmental targets/actions with teaching staff, HoD and A/DoL

It was confirmed a review of the pilot observation framework is to be conducted in the summer term to inform next year's observation framework.

## **8. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

It was confirmed the report is in compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and with Surrey County Council Safeguarding, which state that the Governing Body must undertake an annual review of its Policies and procedures and how these duties have been discharged. Such a review is also an integral part of the Reigate College Safeguarding Policy.

Due to the rise in student with serious mental health concerns safety planning and risk assessments have been updated and training on suicide awareness and supporting suicide attempt will take place in the summer inset. The pastoral team have undertaken mental health first aid course and the safeguarding team have undertaken suicide prevention training. The safeguarding team are working with the Samaritans to offer support to student in crisis outside of college hours. Samaritans are also providing advice and guidance on planning for if a student does die by suicide. Protocols are now in place. Due to the mental health and wellbeing provision in schools guidance published in October in 2018, the post of Pastoral Director for Mental Health and Wellbeing has been created to focus on this growing area within the College.

The meeting reviewed the referral data published in the report.

It was noted with concern that Surrey County Council again was rated by Ofsted as 'Inadequate' for Safeguarding. Despite this the College continues to work with the Council when referrals are made.

The Safeguarding team continues to work very closely with a dedicated Student Support Team, consisting of experienced and committed Pastoral Care Managers, a strong and comprehensive Study and Support team, and a highly utilised Counselling service. These areas of the College, coupled with a very effective administration team, provide seamless support for students.

## 9. STUDENT RETENTION UPDATE

The current retention rates were confirmed as follows:

Type	Starters	Joiners	Leavers	Continuers	Retention %
L	1239	2	46	1195	96.29%
P	119	0	13	106	89.08%
U	1088	1	12	1077	98.90%
<b>Total</b>	2446	3	71	2378	97.10%

The college has seen a reduction of 0.55% in the retention rates between the renumeration date and the May Day bank holiday for 2018/19 compared to 2017/18. The retention rate is 0.07% higher than 2016/17.

Although there appears to be a significant increase in the number of level 2 students leaving early in 18/19 (13 leavers) compared with the 3 leavers in 2017/18, the data for 17/18 had an exceptionally low number of early leavers. In 2016/17, the number of early leavers was 11.

The reasons for early Level 2 leavers for 18/19 were confirmed as follows:

- Transferred to another educational provision/apprenticeship 3
- Family issues / moving away from area 4
- Exclusion 1
- Employment 1
- Non attendance 2

## 10. NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT RATES FOR GROUPS OF LEARNERS

The colleges included in the data set shown are all S7 colleges, and Thomas Rotherham College as high performing and out of the area comparison.

Overall achievement rates were confirmed as follows:

Institution Name	Overall Cohort	Overall Achievement Rate %	Retention Rate %	Pass Rate %
REIGATE COLLEGE	3,790	97.1	97.3	99.8
ESHER COLLEGE	3,700	89.1	90.8	98.0

BEXHILL COLLEGE	4,490	89.0	92.4	96.3
BRIGHTON HOVE AND SUSSEX SIXTH FORM COLLEGE	5,090	86.1	87.5	98.3
THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER IN HORSHAM	4,720	84.9	86.6	98.0
THOMAS ROTHERHAM COLLEGE	3,070	81.5	85.5	95.4
WOKING COLLEGE	3,440	80.8	83.0	97.4
GODALMING COLLEGE	4,830	78.0	79.3	98.3
VARNDEAN COLLEGE	3,130	69.2	74.4	93.1

The overall Achievement Rate for Reigate is extremely high. Reigate has always been a national leader for this type of measurement. Governors congratulated the College on the excellent set of results.

One area of concern was the data reported for ethnic minorities that does not appear to be in line with the data held by the College. It was **AGREED** for this to be subject to further review with outcomes reported to the Local Governing Body. Notwithstanding this, all ethnicities at Reigate have a higher achievement rate than the national average for all students (84.3% for all sixth form colleges)

## 11. NEW OFSTED INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

The briefing paper was received for information purposes. Governors were offered a training session on the new framework once the full details of the new framework had been assimilated. Governors were asked to contact the Clerk if they wanted to avail themselves to the offer of training.

The Chair requested that the new Ofsted Inspection Handbook be made available to Governors and it was **AGREED** to circulate this by email.

## 12. STUDENT DISCUSSION GROUPS

In previous years the College has used a system of multiple choice questionnaires to ask students about the curriculum. Although this produced easy-to-read data tables there were a number of problems:

- Not all questions were appropriate to all courses
- There was little scope for discussion with students about the reasoning for their responses or how improvements might be made
- In reality, little ever changed as a result of the surveys
- The surveys tended to be viewed as an accountability measure rather than a method of informing improvement
- Discussion of the results of the survey tended to become bogged down in 'what the numbers mean' rather than an actual indication of what would happen as a response

For the current year the College has trialled a discussion group system where departments conduct focus groups with students. Departments have considerable autonomy to conduct the discussions, subject to the groups being discussions and not tick box questionnaires. A very wide range of different approaches have been used and it is anticipated that this approach will evolve. Some areas used questionnaires and discussions, some provided very lengthy sets of feedback, others were much more to the point.

The majority of staff spoken to felt this approach was better than the previous questionnaire approach and have acted upon comments made by students.

Following the discussion groups, staff submitted summaries of discussions. Inevitably, these covered an enormous range of different points and many were very subject specific.

The main recurring points were confirmed as follows:

**“What is done well on this course?”**

- The balance of routine and variety in your lessons. You like the way work is often made relevant to real life and appreciate the interesting “ways in” your teachers use. You speak very well of your teachers.
- Helpful and approachable teachers.
- You like the right amount of work to do between lessons and appreciate being given clear deadlines/mini-deadlines. You feel the resources to do this, electronic and otherwise, are of a high standard.
- The quality of resources in most subjects – learning packs were highly valued.
- The accuracy of assessment, and the positive and constructive feedback given is highly valued and appreciated.
- Key Assessments, especially in timed conditions.
- Independent working.
- Effective/supportive teachers and going through tasks together as a class. Requirements of tasks and content clearly explained.
- Flipped learning – but see below.

**“even better if...”**

- Lessons can sometimes seem too long, especially double periods, and the effort needed and given is not always very even.
- You would sometimes like more direction on the work undertaken, especially between lessons... how long, how many words, where to find resources et cetera. Checklists are often found to be helpful.
- Sometimes more time spent might be spent inducting students onto a new course or introducing a new topic.
- More exam practice e.g. writing answers or looking at past papers
- Some students found flipped learning difficult.
- Increase group work activities in lesson
- More time to complete assignments in lessons

It was noted the process of open communication between staff and students that this new approach requires has been extremely beneficial and the outcomes of the discussions has proved to be invaluable. There has been positive engagement from the students.

### **13. STAFF DISCUSSION GROUPS**

In the summer of 2018, each member of College staff was given the opportunity to attend a staff consultation with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). This document summarises the responses and the actions that the SLT are taking to address any concerns and implement suggestions raised in these meetings.

The majority of staff took part in the consultations. Although a large number of positives were outlined, SLT asked staff to primarily focus on developments, innovation and raise any concerns. Following the identification of these actions, the SLT met over a period of four months to further analyse the findings and agree actions for implementation. It should be noted that many of the actions require additional resourcing – both in terms of people and finance. Therefore, priorities have to be identified and ranked in terms of impact and resourcing required.

In the analysis, a good number of these challenges were identified as straightforward to fix or were already being worked on. In addition, there were lots of suggestions for improving efficiency and effectiveness, which are now going to be implemented.

The vast majority of the feedback has led to positive outcomes and has informed future plans, priorities and workflows. A lot of the resulting actions have now been or will soon be implemented, leaving only larger on-going projects that either require significant time or monetary investments.

Each year, a random selection of staff will be selected to provide feedback from across the College. This will provide a base level of participation. However, SLT will also hold open sessions that staff can sign up to if they wish to provide feedback or suggestions, enabling all staff to contribute annually should they wish.

Governors were asked to give an opinion on the random selection methods to be used and it was accepted that the approach be varied in different years.

#### **14. SELF ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Self Assessment Development Plan provided an update on each of the areas identified in the Self Assessment Report where actions were required for further improvement. There were no issues of concern raised during the review of the Development Plan with all targets either having been met, or are on schedule to be met against the target date set.

#### **15. CURRICULUM OFFER 2020**

The review conducted by the College confirmed the following:

- The curriculum offer is suitable for the large majority of students. The College does not have either the skills or capacity to expand into unfamiliar curriculum areas, especially those already well covered at ESC.
- The entrance requirements strike the right balance between learners being able to complete courses and learners having access to those courses in the first place
- A number of modifications had already been made to address some concerns relating to appropriate literacy and numeracy skills in subjects with an increased need for these skills as a result of curriculum reform
- The aim is to expand the curriculum to include additional BTEC qualifications in Media and Criminology
- Neither BTEC nor Ofqual seem able to confirm the future status of Public Services. Criminology will help to fill the gap created if we do lose this course.
- Changes to the BTEC exam seem to suggest that it looks to be easier to get through than had been the case with the 2016 version until the N grade appeared

- The College will continue to monitor fluctuations in demand for subjects but we do not currently plan to remove any subjects
- The College will continue to monitor demand for resource intensive courses such as sciences and expand provision where possible.

It was reported the DfE have launched a consultation process on the future of the Applied General qualifications (BTECs). In a worst-case scenario these would disappear from September 2023, although it seems likely that this will not be the case. The College is lobbying, with other colleges, schools, higher education and employers for the Government to retain these qualifications.

## 16. STUDENT INPUT

No issues of concern were raised with it being reported by the student Governors that students were feeling very positive towards the College and their learning. Governors asked how the student Governors sought the views from fellow students and it was confirmed this was from talking with students.

Rebecca Griffen made reference to the strong pastoral care provided by the College despite some of the negative messages promoted in schools where concerns were expressed on the lack of pastoral care at the College. She said since joining the College she has been impressed on the level of pastoral support provided and the message that is being promoted in schools is not the true picture. Governors suggested for students to use social media to promote the excellent pastoral care and support that is available at the College.

## 17. BOARD ASSURANCE ASSESSMENTS ON REPORTS RECEIVED AT THE MEETING

Under the newly introduced Board Assurance Framework (BAF), each Committee is asked to conduct at the end of their meeting an assessment on their level of assurance agreed against each report received (including briefings and verbal updates) and for the assessment to be reported to the Audit Committee and Trust Board (Green = high assurance - no additional actions or monitoring are recommended at this point; Amber = medium assurance – a further report is likely to be required at the next meeting; Red = low assurance - additional actions are likely to be required and reported at the next meeting).

Governors felt that there should be an accompanying coversheet for each agenda item, with the coversheet confirming how the report provided a high level of assurance, any risks arising, and the decision being asked of Governors. In response it was noted that coversheets had been used previously but the process had become somewhat repetitive and a new approach was proposed. However, it was **AGREED** that more information on assurances and risks should be made available on each report and this could be done in a short opening paragraph to be used in all reports. The opening paragraph to be used to provide to governors information on the purpose of the report, i.e., was it purely for information purposes, or to give governors assurance on one of their statutory duties, or to support decision making.

It was **AGREED** to bring this to the attention of the Audit Committee for further discussion and Yvette Robbins offered to make examples available from Board Assurance Frameworks used in the NHS.

The Chair sought from Governors their overall view on the level of assurances provided from the reports received at this meeting. It was unanimously agreed that

the reports received were comprehensive and provided a high level of assurance as befitting a college that is good.

**18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 18.00.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Points:**

Minute 10: One area of concern was the data reported for ethnic minorities that does not appear to be in line with the data held by the College. It was **AGREED** for this to be subject to further review with outcomes reported to the Local Governing Body.

Minute 11: Governors were asked to contact the Clerk if they wanted to avail themselves to the offer of training on the new Ofsted Inspection Framework.

The Chair requested that the new Ofsted Inspection Handbook be made available to Governors and it was **AGREED** to circulate this by email.

Minute 17: It was **AGREED** that more information on assurances and risks should be made available on each report and this could be done in a short opening paragraph to be used in all reports.

It was **AGREED** to bring this to the attention of the Audit Committee for further discussion and Yvette Robbins offered to make examples available from Board Assurance Frameworks used in the NHS.