



**MINUTES OF THE REIGATE LEARNING ALLIANCE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2023 AT 16.30**

Present: Mr Spencer Bowen - LGB Member/LGB Chair
 Mr Chris Whelan - Chief Executive Officer & LGB Member
 Mr Nick Clark – Executive Principal & LGB Member
 Mr Gerard Weide – LGB Member
 Ms Claire Hassan- LGB Staff Member
 Mr Jeremy Garner – LGB Member
 Ms Eva da Silva– LGB Student Member
 Ms Amelia Rolt – LGB Student Member

In attendance: Mr Jon Allen - Clerk
 Ms Sarah Walters - Deputy Principal

1 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Reigate Learning Alliance Local Governing Body (LGB). Welcomed to their first meeting were the two student governors – Eva da Silva and Amelia Rolt.

It was confirmed letters will be sent out next week to seek nominations for the parent governor vacancy and, if more than one nomination is received, an election will be held involving all parents/guardians.

2 APOLOGIES & QUORACY

Apologies were received from Yvette Robbins, Nicola Thompson, and Cheryl Aquis.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Spencer Bowen, Gerard Weide, Chris Whelan, 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 16 May 2023 (Paper 1) were received and approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5 SUMMARY ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING

The ‘*Summary Action List*’ was received (Paper 2) and the following updates were noted:

MIN	ACTION	UPDATE
10	The Internal Audit Report on Learner Support to be made available to the Trustee linked to this area of the College.	Completed.
10	Final review of the annual targets to be undertaken at the autumn term meeting of the LGB when outcome data will be made available.	Agenda item at this meeting

11	Governors noted from the review of the retention data that proportionally the number of U6 female leavers is slightly higher than U6 male students, and asked if there were any reasons behind this? The CEO reported that he was not aware of any emerging issues but would review and report back at the next meeting.	
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With regards to the query raised in minute 11, the CEO confirmed there were 17 female leavers but, as there were more female than male students, there were no particular issues or risks associated with the data between the number of female/male leavers. Of the 17, 4 left due to having a break in learning, mainly due to illnesses, with the expectation that they will return to their learning. One left for paid employment. 3 progressed to other educational establishments, 5 progressed to Apprenticeships, and 1 failed their vocational course. Of the remaining 3 students, their reasons for leaving were unknown, despite follow-ups to the 3 students and their parents/guardians.

Governors welcomed the breakdown and noted the assurances received of there being no particular issues or risks associated with the data between the number of female/male learners.

6. ADMISSIONS AND NUMBERS ON ROLL & MARKETING STRATEGIES

The report (Paper 3) confirmed the number of full-time students on roll at the time the report was written was 2,893, compared against 2,840 for the previous year. The analysis of the full-time student population confirmed the following:

	Totals
One Year Intermediate Course (P)	120 (80)
Lower Sixth Advanced Course (L)	1448 (1399)
Upper Sixth Advanced Course (U)	1325 (1390)
Total	2893 (2840)

The retention rate for students progressing from the L6 to the U6 was 94.3%, an improvement on the figure of 91.8% for the previous academic year. Governors welcomed confirmation of the improved retention.

The percentage of students progressing from the Intermediate course was 47.5% (58.3%). Governors sought an explanation on why the figure was lower than in the previous year. In response it was stated this was likely due to the grade inflation from the previous year's GCSEs. This meant that more students gained a place on the programme due to the inflated results, who would have normally not met the requirements, and most likely they would have gone to another College, such as East Surrey. As a result, they found the work level a tougher challenge and did not achieve the required grades to progress to Level 3. The total number of students was once again much smaller than normal, which means that every student not progressing to Level 3 has a more significant impact on the percentage of progression.

The proportion of partner school students as a total of all new students has slightly decreased to 31.5% (34%). Governors sought an explanation for the slight decrease. The reason given for the slight decline in conversion was due to the GCSE grades

being a result of 'normal' assessment. Therefore, a higher proportion of students did not meet the entry requirements for the College and as a result would have gone elsewhere. This was similar to the previous year, when the results were pegged to a halfway house between 2019 and 2021 results.

When combined with an overall increase in the number of applications from other schools, the overall percentage has decreased. It is expected that the percentage of the new College intake each year from Partner Schools will reach a norm of approximately a third.

The College held three sold out Open Evenings with some 7,500-8,000 visitors over the three evenings, which is a sign that applications will once again be buoyant.

Governors asked if there were any Executive concerns on admissions? In response it was reported there were some concerns on a very small number of courses that under recruited and actions to address under recruitment are being discussed with those curriculum teams and are summarised in the annual targets paper, a later agenda item (Paper 5). Other than this, there were no serious concerns to bring to the attention of the LGB. Governors welcomed the assurances given, the excellent recruitment for the current academic year, and the positive attendance at the three open evenings.

The report was noted.

7. DRAFT OUTCOME DATA 2022/23

The outcome data presented in the report (Paper 4) was of 21 September 2023. It was confirmed further benchmarking updates will become available from the DfE in February 2024 and April 2024. The data presented is based on exam board data and Six Dimensions – a set of standardised reports used by the majority of Sixth Form Colleges.

The following key headlines were noted from the report:

- Grade boundaries for England (but not Wales or Northern Ireland) are near to the 2019 levels – but not the same.
- The college A level high grades score was 57.2%, this was above 2019 (53.3%) and the national data for 2023 (52.7%).
- The value-added score for A levels was above average for Sixth Form Colleges nationally (+0.13 grades per entry), but it is not possible to say in which quartile this falls as this information is not available.
- BTEC High Grades were 55.7% for the main qualification (Extended Certificate). It is not useful to compare this to 2019 as the assessment pattern was very different. We do not have any data about national high grades rates for BTEC.
- The value-added score for BTEC was average (+0.02 grades per entry) compared to Sixth Form Colleges nationally.
- Most vocational qualifications are distorted by the impact of any results input as TAGs last summer (BTEC qualifications are assessed over two years) so national comparisons are not useful.
- The students taking A levels and BTECs in 2023 had not taken GCSE exams in 2021. The grade inflation, along with other demographic factors, caused a 45% increase in the A level cohort. Nationally the increase was 8.25%. this caused concern that we had a large exposure to weaker students not being able to complete or pass their qualifications.

- Retention rates for A levels are in the top 25% for Sixth Form Colleges nationally, data for BTECs is not available.
- The proportion of students progressing to higher education on a value added basis was average for sixth form colleges at 67%, however, the proportion going to elite universities (Sutton 30) was 5% higher than average (32%).
- More than 100 students achieved straight A*/A grades in at least three A levels.
- 79% of students achieved at least one high grade qualification.
- More than 250 students were accepted at Russell Group universities.
- 84% of students were admitted to their first-choice university.
- Out of 22 EHCP students, 21 completed their studies and 14 achieved at least one high grade.
- Level 2 qualifications are the smallest area of college provision, at about 2%. Overall pass rates for the BTEC level 2 were at 100%, against a national average National of 71.6% (2022 – 2023 data not yet available)
- Pass rate for English GCSE was at 71.9% against a national rate of 28.4%.
- Pass rate for Maths GCSE was at 39.69% against a national rate of 18%.

Made available in the report was a detailed breakdown on outcomes for each subject area. For the few areas requiring improvements, targets have been set as listed in the Development Plan (Paper 5).

Governors welcomed the excellent confirmed outcomes for 2022/23 and asked for the minutes to record thanks to all the staff for their input and hard work.

The report was noted.

8. REIGATE COLLEGE DRAFT SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2022/23 & ANNUAL TARGETS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

It was confirmed the Self Assessment Report 2022/23 is on schedule to be presented to the December Trust Board for approval.

The report on annual targets from the Development Plan was received for review (Paper 5).

Governors reviewed in detail the annual targets proposed for each of the 10 strategic aims from the College's Strategic Plan.

It was noted the final version of the annual targets will be published in the College SAR 2022/23 which in turn will be subject to Trust Board approval at the December Trust Board meeting. Once approved, the annual targets will be subject to on-going review at each meeting of the Trust Board.

Governors asked if there was any progress made on the use of recycling bins. As previously brought to the attention of Governors, the contract with the external contractor for the collection of general waste and recycling stipulates that there must be no mixing of recyclable items in designated recycling bins. Should there be repeated mixing of recycling items in the bins the contractor will withdrawal their services, including the collection of general waster. Recycling bins were reintroduced at the start of this term but again students were mixing recyclable items and, therefore, the decision was made to remove the bins. Further briefings on the correct use of recycling bins will again be made available to students before the use of recycling bins is reintroduced. It was confirmed the matter is scheduled to be discussed in detail at the next meeting of the College's Sustainability Committee.

9. STUDENT VOICE

The two student governors raised no issues or concerns and commented positively on the work of the Students Union. A Freshers Event is being held in the College this week and a Cultural Day has been organised along with several events to mark Black History Week.

10. STAFF VOICE

The staff governor asked if any action had been taken to address concerns previously raised on the sale of high caffeine drinks, such as Monster drinks.

The Executive Principal confirmed a thorough review had been undertaken on the range of high caffeine drinks on offer in the refectory. The suggested safe level of caffeine per drink is 200mg. Against this figure it was agreed reduce the selection of drinks and to only offer those drinks that did not exceed 160mg per drink. In addition, it was agreed to restrict the sale of such drinks to just one drink at a time. In addition, prices on these drinks have been increased by £1 per drink.

The staff governor noted and welcomed the actions taken to restrict the sale of high caffeine drinks.

11. BOARD ASSURANCE ASSESSMENTS

Under the 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).

The Board agreed the following board assurance assessments for agenda items/reports considered at this meeting (Paper 6).

Agenda Item	Subject	RAG rating	Any recommendation(s) or action(s) arising from discussions on the agenda item; Any comment(s) on the quality of the paper(s)/presentation(s) made available for the agenda item.
6	Admissions & Numbers	Green	No Recommendations/Actions arising from discussions.
7	Draft Outcome Data	Green	No Recommendations/Actions arising from discussions.
8	Self Assessment Report 2022/23 & Annual Targets from the SAR	Amber	Still work in progress – final version to be approved at the December Trust Board meeting
9	Student Voice	Green	No Recommendations/Actions arising from discussions.
10	Staff Voice	Green	No Recommendations/Actions arising from discussions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

- 13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Tuesday 30 January 2024 at 16.30.

The meeting closed at 18.30.

Signed: _____ Date: _____