MINUTES OF THE REIGATE COLLEGE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON 07 MAY 2024 AT 16.40

Present:	Mr Spencer Bowen – LGB Member, Chair
	Mr Chris Whelan - Chief Executive Officer & LGB Member
	Mr Gerard Weide – LGB Member
	Ms Yvette Robbins – LGB Member, Vice Chair
	Mr Jeremy Garner – LGB Member
	Mr Nick Clark – Executive Principal & LGB Member
	Ms Nicola Thompson - LGB Staff Member
	Ms Claire Hassan – LGB Staff Member
	Ms Cheryl Agius – LGB Parent Member
	Ms Jenny Sharma – LGB Parent Member
	Ms Sophia Bryant – LGB Student Governor
	Ms Daisy Vera– LGB Student Governor
In attendance:	Mr Jon Allen – Governance Professional
	Ms Sarah Walters
	Ms Mel Pearl (Agenda 7 only - Safeguarding Report)

1   WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The two new student governors, Sophia Bryant and Daisy Vera, were welcomed to their first meeting.

2   APOLOGIES & QUORACY

There were no apologies. The Governance Professional confirmed the meeting was quorate.

3   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Yvette Robbins, Spencer Bowen, Gerard Weide, Chris Whelan, and Nick Clark declared their interest in being Trustees of the Reigate Learning Alliance.

There were no other declared interests.

4   MINUTES

The minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting held 29 January 2024 (Paper 1) were received and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

5   MATTERS ARISING

There were no follow-up actions or matters arising from the minutes.

6.   SUSTAINABILITY

An update was made available on the work of the College's Sustainability Committee that meets every half term. The aim of the Committee is to discuss sustainability matters and to promote a range of green initiatives. It was confirmed two students from the Students Union will be joining the Committee.

An outline was given on the decarbonisation audit that was recently undertaken. The College is looking at a range of options to work towards 'Net Zero' but to do so in a

cost effective way. Grants have been obtained to purchase two heat pumps and the College is now looking at enabling costs to install the pumps.

The Executive Principal confirmed that prior to this meeting he met with the committee chairs and agreement was reached on a broad way forward without incurring unrealistic costs.

Governors welcomed the update made available.

Governors asked if there were any further updates on recycling. After numerous discussions with the Local Council, it was reported the Council is now considering a recycling service for educational establishments that would include mix bin recycling. Further discussions are taking place, and it is hoped for implementation from September.

A discussion took place on transport links and what action is being taken to reduce student car usage. It was confirmed most students travelling on public transport do so by train. The 4.15 finish at the end of each day was introduced to enable students to access trains as a later finish would result in a long wait for the next services. The College advises students not to drive, but for those who rely on the use of a car, a parking space has been allocated to them.

7. **ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT**
Mel Pearl was in attendance for this agenda item to present the '*Annual Safeguarding Report 2023/24'* (Paper 2).

The report presented data on the number and categories of those students who have been identified at various degrees of risk and the number of referrals made to various external agencies. Data presented for 2023/24 was compared against data for the proceeding two years.

Governors were updated on matters relating to vulnerable students and the extensive support systems that are in place to provide on-going support.

Governors were updated on a number of emerging issues and the actions being taken to address.

The report confirmed all staff have received the required safeguarding and Prevent training. It was confirmed all staff and Governors have had enhanced DBS checks and all protocols set down by "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' have been met. The College maintains the single central record and regular checks are carried out to ensure full compliance.

Ofsted reported during their inspection of the College that safeguarding was robust and effective. The Internal Audit Service undertook an audit of safeguarding in January 2024 and the report, that was considered by the Audit & Risk Committee, gave a 'Strong' assurance. Focus group meetings with students confirmed they feel safe and know how to report concerns.

It was confirmed the College fully complies with the requirements in "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023'.

A discussion took place on whether the College has considered to directly employ specialist professionals to provide counselling/support to the students, especially as there is a significant waiting time for students to access some external services. Or,

alternatively, to share the employment of such professionals with other Colleges. In reply it was stated the College is here to provide education and to enable students to achieve their qualifications. The College was not in a position to 'resolve' their problems. Instead, the College provides 'advice and support' through the safeguarding team and 'refers' students to the appropriate professional/external service. The College cannot address weaknesses in the external agencies.

Governors thanked Mel Pearl for her report and minuted thanks to the safeguarding team for their hard work and professionalism.

(Mel Pearl left the meeting)

8. **COLLEGE TARGETS FROM THE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)**
The paper '*College Annual Targets from the SAR*' was received for review (Paper 3). Changes made since the last meeting were highlighted in grey.

The key priority of the Development Plan was to address the areas of development identified by Ofsted, these being:

- EHCP
- Work experience opportunities for students
- Enhancement activities for students
- Target setting for students

It was confirmed the internal auditor has undertaken a full audit of EHCP and the audit confirmed the actions taken have addressed the areas for development identified during the Ofsted inspection. The Lead Inspector at the last Ofsted inspection is now a consultant. The College commissioned him to undertake a review of the area and he reported all the issues identified at the inspection have now been addressed.

The College continues revising the approach to developing student participation in work related activities. Further guidance has been provided to students and the main work experience period is in June. Although participation in work experience has improved, it has been suggested to the College to aim for 80% completion.

The aim continues to increase the level of student participation in enrichment activities. As of 18.04.2024

- 93.58% of all students enrolled have taken part in a form of enrichment.
- 88.16% of students have taken part in a club or activity.
- 63.45% of all students have been on a trip.
- 56.22% have registered 5 or more individual attendances,
- 3.71% of Upper sixth students have not yet engaged.

Further to the Ofsted report, arrangements were put in place to improve the ability of staff and students to set and monitor academic targets. A new target setting system was introduced in September with staff setting students their targets. The SLT monitoring of progress is on-going and student focus group meetings were held in February/March to check student engagement and understanding of target setting. Students reported that targets are set but that follow up is variable. Further training will be held with staff on how best to use the student set targets.

It was confirmed the final review of the annual targets will be undertaken at the autumn term meeting of the LGB when final outcome data will be made available.

9. **STUDENT RETENTION & ATTENDANCE UPDATE**

The following date for 2023/24 was received (Paper 4). The report confirmed the headline retention rates for all students in 2023/24 were within 1% of the previous year.

(i)   Retention

2023-24: Headline retention rates by student type:

Type	Starters	Joiners	Leavers	Continuers	Retention %
L	1442	0	32	1410	97.78%
P	121	0	5	116	95.87%
T	1	0	0	1	100.00%
U	1320	0	25	1295	98.11%
Total	2884	0	62	2822	97.85%

Equivalent period for 2022-23:

Type	Starters	Joiners	Leavers	Continuers	Retention %
L	1394	0	37	1357	97.35%
P	80	0	4	76	95.00%
T	1	0	0	1	100.00%
U	1389	0	14	1375	98.99%
Total	2864	0	55	2809	98.08%

Equivalent period for 2021-22:

Type	Starters	Joiners	Leavers	Continuers	Retention %
L	1501	1	48	1454	96.80%
P	50	0	2	48	96.00%
T	1	0	0	1	100.00%
U	1265	0	15	1250	98.81%
Total	2817	1	65	2753	97.69%

The report provided retention data for the following categories:

- Retention of Bursary groups
- Retention of gender
- Retention for ethnicity groups
- Retention for learning difficulty and disabilities

The total number of enumerated students who left before the completion of their courses was 62. Of the 62 leavers, 7 progressed into an apprenticeship; 9 progressed into employment; 14 progressed into education; 17 were classified as 'Other' with 11

of these being a break in education due to medical reasons; and 15 were 'unknown'. The 'Not Known' category means 'any student who is not able to state what they will be doing next at the point of leaving the college'.

Although the number for females is higher than the number for males, this reflects the fact that there are more female students than make students. 55% of the early leavers are female, and females are 56% of the student body.

BAME students are 13% of the early leaving students, but 25% of the overall student body.

It was noted the retention rate for students with LDD is 1%+ lower than for students without LDD and this led to a discussion, especially if compared against published DfE data. The CEO stated, as he has done over the last four years since Covid, that the DfE data is not a good comparison for year on year analysis, as the GCSE grading has been unreliable. The DfE are not currently producing data in the same detail as before 2020. With a retention rate of over 96% for LDD students the CEO was of the view that this is probably very good.

(ii) **Attendance**

The following attendance data was made available (total attendance is the raw data and adjusted attendance takes into account reported illness, interviews, exams and other legitimate reasons for absence):

Description	Total Attendance	Adjusted Attendance
Overall	91.59	97.73
L	94.08	98.54
P	89.69	96.45
U	89.16	96.99
BAME	91.52	97.59
Bursary	86.73	96.35
EHCP	93.59	98.14
Free College Meals	86.49	95.69
LLDD	88.37	97.22
Parents not university educated	89.80	97.06
R1	77.03	92.80
R2	84.41	95.73
R3	90.16	97.42
R4	90.12	96.73

The biggest differences in attendance rates were for students in the R1 category who often have serious difficulties affecting their ability to attend college. The number of students who are R1 fluctuates so providing an exact picture across the year is difficult. As of 15/04/2024 there were 15 R1 students.

The table below confirmed similarly high levels of attendance over the last 3 years.

Description	Total Attendance	Adjusted Attendance
2023/24 Overall	91.59	97.73
2022/23 Overall	91.38	97.61
2021/22 Overall	92.10	97.47

Governors welcomed the detailed data presented for both retention and attendance and noted there were no issues of concern on either retention and attendance.

10. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE LGB'S TERMS OF REFERENCE**
The report made available provided Governors with a copy of the current terms of reference approved by the Trust Board and proposed changes to be considered by the LGB *(Paper 5)*.

It was noted an extensive review of the Terms of Reference was undertaken during 2020/21 following completion of the Trust's Scheme of Delegation with annual reviews in subsequent years.

During the review last year, under section one, it was agreed to expand the scope of safeguarding and wellbeing of students to incorporate physical and mental well-being in terms of the influences by lifestyle choices of diet, exercise, stress and relationship management.

No changes were proposed to the Terms of Reference for the LGB.

11. **STAFF VOICE**
No issues/concerns were raised by the staff governors.

12. **STUDENT VOICE**
No issues/concerns were raised by the student governors.

13. **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 & Risk Committee and Trust Board. Added to the report was the new requirement to comment on the quality of papers and or presentations received.

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	Annual Safeguarding Report	Green	No concerns
7	Sustainability	Green	No Concerns

8	College Targets	Green	No concerns
9	Student Retention & Attendance	Green	No Concerns
10	LGB Terms of Reference	Green	No concerns
11	Staff Voice	Green	No Concerns
12	Student Voice	Green	No Concerns

14. MEETING REVIEW

The Committee was asked if there were any new risks including safeguarding identified as a result of decisions made at this meeting that might impact upon the College's effectiveness. Other than the point raised on the unreliability of DfE data, which is not impacting on actual College results which remain strong. To give further assurance to Governors the CEO confirmed part of the funding from the ESFA's Allocation Statement has a factor of funding for retention. The funding received for retention has increased which reflects the College's good retention rates.

It was agreed no issues or risks were identified.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A question was raised on MIS staffing shortages – It was confirmed the College is actively recruiting to fill the vacant posts and assurances were given that there is a fully functioning MIS team in place with no risks to the College.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 18.00.

Signed: _____ Date: _____