
















# Minutes

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## Academic Committee

### Minutes

<b>Meeting Time and Date</b>	<b>1000 on 17 June 2024</b>
<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Zoom Online</b>
<b>Members</b>	Heather Barrett-Mold OBE  Sheila Cunningham (Vice Chair)  Darrell DeSouza OBE  Lorna Fitzjohn  Sarah Moreland MBE Joanne Roxburgh  Stephen Way  Peter Brammall (Principal)  Zoe Halfyard (Staff Governor)  Milana Uginciute (Student Governor) Richard Elliott (Student Governor)  Alexis Malpica (Student Governor)
<b>Participants</b>	Roger McClure  Paulina Balogun  James Bryan (HR) Paul Smith (Deputy Principal) Denise Lloyd (Vice Principal) 
<b>Minute Taker</b>	Joanne Coffey (Director of Governance) 
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	<b>Action</b>
<b>1. Apologies</b>	
1.1. Apologies were received for Sarah Moreland, Milana Uginciute, Alexis Malpica, James Bryan and Paul Smith.	
<b>2. Declaration of Interests</b>	
2.1. None.	
<b>3. Minutes</b>	<b>*Vice Principal</b>
3.1. Some points that had not been included in the previous minutes were that:*  a) A report on the reasons behind student absence would be useful to reduce lost learning.  b) It was important that Safeguarding track down to the individual student level the reasons behind them reporting not feeling safe at College.	

<p>3.2. It was confirmed that the College had spent the allocation of digital and green skills funds from the Local London and West London LSIP project, by the deadline of April 2024.</p> <p>3.3. These funds had been spent in line with the College's digital strategy</p> <p><b>Resolved to</b></p> <p>3.4. <b>Agree the minutes of the Academic Committee meeting held on 20 November 2023 as a correct record and authorise the Chair to approve them.</b></p>	
<p><b>4. Matters Arising</b></p> <p>4.1. It was corrected that the HE partnership meeting included Governors Joanne Roxburgh and Sheila Cunningham.*</p> <p>4.2. As more work was needed to revise and expand the HE Strategy, it was agreed that additional meetings would be arranged.*</p> <p><b>Stephen Way joined the meeting.</b></p>	<p><b>*Governance (Completed)</b></p> <p><b>*Vice Principal</b></p>
<p><b>5. Annual Review of Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>5.1. Following consultation at the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee meeting in May 2024, it was agreed to stipulate that there should also be a minimum of termly pre-meetings between the Chair and SLT lead.</p> <p>5.2. Reference to the Strategy Committee was removed.</p> <p><b>Resolved to</b></p> <p>5.3. <b>Academic Committee to accept their revised Terms of Reference and recommend them to the Governing Body for adoption.</b></p>	<p><b>A: Governing Body (Appendix I)</b></p>
<p><b>6. Report of the Vice Principal (Information)</b></p> <p><b><u>Ofsted Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p>6.1. The Ofsted monitoring report documented overall Reasonable Progress which had been the College's aim.</p> <p>6.2. The report will facilitate the College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR), to build strength through the Quality Team, with two new Quality Practitioners (QP), and further development of coaching and mentoring in the classroom.</p> <p><b><u>Student Satisfaction Survey</u></b></p> <p>6.3. The in-year student satisfaction survey signified some positive improvements during the year.</p> <p>6.4. Governors noted that importance of the Student Voice to have them advocate for their own needs, to ensure that they want to be part of any new plans.</p> <p>6.5. It was acknowledged that the survey required more clarity in its questions.</p>	

<p>6.6. Governors requested that the full results of the surveys were made available to them, going forwards.*</p> <p>6.7. Governors queried whether the survey timing could be brought forwards, so that the end of year survey could be aligned with this summer Committee meeting.</p> <p>6.8. The date had been changed to allow more students studying for GCSE's, and with the Royal Horticulture Society (RHS), to be able to complete it. The Vice Principal would check if timing could be changed, whilst ensuring the balance between opportunity to respond and time to report.*</p> <p>6.9. It was agreed that delaying the summer Academic Committee would not align with Student Governor availability to attend.</p>	<p><b>*Vice Principal</b></p>
<p><b><u>Continuous Professional Development (CPD)</u></b></p> <p>6.10. The recent CPD events had received a very positive response, particularly due to the embedded wellbeing activities.</p> <p>6.11. Due to the positive feedback, further wellbeing sessions were being planned.</p> <p>6.12. Governors agreed that this had been a good addition and were invited to present, or offer, any wellbeing skills via these sessions.</p> <p>6.13. Governors also queried whether Teaching, Learning and Assessment upskilling could take place via regular MS Teams meetings, for staff to get a better feel for immersion in teaching and learning.</p> <p>6.14. This could form part of an existing plan to stop teaching on a Wednesday at 3pm to allow staff to have a generic 'Wellbeing Wednesday' CPD slot. It was, however, acknowledged that land based classes may lose out on the precious daylight in the winter and that this needed to be factored in.</p> <p>6.15. The Staff Governor noted that many students would benefit from finding out more about how the College was run and to meet more staff, including the Principal and SLT. The Vice Principal felt this was a great idea and would align with the updated Student Engagement Policy (to be forwarded to the Staff Governor*) strategies to encourage direct engagement at campuses rather than relying too heavily on the surveys.*</p>	<p><b>*Vice Principal</b></p>
<p><b><u>Quality of Teaching and Learning</u></b></p> <p>6.16. The College had launched the Education Training Foundation (ETF) Professional Standards Framework to act as a consistent structure for the College to work towards.</p> <p>6.17. The on-boarding for new staff had improved and the passport to teaching had been well received. This would be reflected on through retention rates of new staff, to ensure that they were able to maintain their new, sometimes heavy, workloads.</p> <p>6.18. Governors queried how the lack of staff resources were being filled for the mentoring of new staff. The new Quality Practitioners, who now covered all campuses, had been providing</p>	

<p>one to one support to 32 new members of staff. However, it was acknowledged that this was not as ideal as learning from a long term member of staff, which was part of the aspiration to retain good staff.</p> <p>6.19. As inconsistency of quality across campuses had been a prior issue, more focus was being given to ensuring a cross-campus, high quality student experience from September 2024.</p> <p>6.20. Governors discussed how the consistency of quality was a key issue and that it was good to see the passport and standard being utilised. This could also be built into appraisals moving forwards.</p> <p>6.21. The College completed the annual Student Services, Admissions, Business Development &amp; Apprenticeships Matrix external assessment in March 2024 and was successful in re-accreditation.</p> <p>6.22. The assessor, who had visited for the past 4 years, commented on the significant developments in the College's systems and processes that demonstrated continuous improvements.</p> <p>6.23. Governors discussed the historical challenges around the College's admissions processes, which the feedback in the assessment had alluded to.</p> <p>6.24. These challenges had inspired discussion at the Academic Committee over the years, which led to a new Manager of Recruitment and Admission being appointed. There were now clear improvements in the student recruitment process.</p> <p>6.25. Governors noted the need to be cautious in not relying only on external organisations for feedback, as Capel should already be aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Management felt that they were now being more open and transparent with Governors in terms of self-awareness.</p> <p><b><u>Attendance</u></b></p> <p>6.26. Overall College attendance to was tracking slightly behind the same time last year at 83.3% against 83.6% in 2022-23.</p> <p>6.27. The College was continuing to find ways to improve student attendance, with significant strategies in place and new ones being introduced in September 2024.</p> <p>6.28. Data was now much more robust, allowing for targeted reflection on which strategies to continue with.</p> <p>6.29. More external support was being sought from parents and carers to support their students' efforts.</p> <p>6.30. The Committee discussed the ongoing challenge of student attendance. Apprenticeships and High Needs had significantly improved but 16-18 remained the main challenge across the sector.</p> <p>6.31. As students were more likely to attend if they felt that there was something exciting that they would not want to miss out on,</p>	
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<p>particularly if it could not be attained post event, more innovative lessons were being planned.</p> <p>6.32. It was also acknowledged that anxiety and mental health featured high on reasons why students did not attend College. This was being addressed with the Wellbeing Team.</p> <p>6.33. The Student Governor queried the need for 16-18 students to require consent from their parents/carers if they needed to go home early. It was clarified that this was for the students' safety, to ensure that the parents/carers were aware that the student was their responsibility at that time, in terms of travel and access to a safe place.</p> <p>6.34. The Student Governor noted that students with 100% attendance were invited to attend congratulatory outings, such as to Thorpe Park and termly Pizza Parties, which he felt might motivate newer students to keep up attendance if they were aware of it sooner. It was agreed to add this to the appropriate marketing and induction materials.*</p> <p>6.35. The Student Governors noted that the new Student Common Room at Enfield had been a great success with his peers.</p> <p><b><u>Predicted achievement</u></b></p> <p>6.36. Overall achievement was forecast in Period 2 to be at the same level as the previous year but Period 3 predictions were still being calculated to give a more accurate figure.</p> <p>6.37. There had been some challenges around the synoptic testing of students which led to additional support being provided in the evening to help them to prepare for their exams, re-takes and assignment delivery.</p> <p>6.38. Moving forward course structures would move to a more modular delivery, to provide students the opportunity to complete units throughout the year, and allow for more accurate predictions of achievement.</p> <p>6.39. Governors suggested that a modular delivery model, which was both practical and motivating for students, should be assessed against what other colleges were offering, particularly around maths and English.*</p> <p>6.40. It was also acknowledged that a modular approach could be a challenge for seasonal, land based modules.</p> <p><b><u>Strategic partnerships</u></b></p> <p>6.41. The College was currently working with Groundworks and had submitted a bid to deliver Green Skill related boot-camps to be rolled out in October 2024. This would also be dependent on the outcome of the general election.</p>	<p><b>*Vice Principal</b></p> <p><b>*Vice Principal</b></p>
<p><b>7. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) (Decision)</b></p>	

<p>7.1. The College's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was formed of 30 individual actions in total, with 3 completed, 17 in progress and on track and 10 in progress which may roll over to 2024-25.</p> <p>7.2. The QIP now included feedback from the Ofsted Monitoring Report.</p> <p>7.3. The current priorities were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To improve student attendance.</li> <li>b) The need for more stretch and challenge, including motivating students to re-sit exams to achieve higher grades.</li> <li>c) 16-18 achievement.</li> <li>d) Consistency in the quality of Teaching and Learning cross-College.</li> </ul> <p>7.4. Lots of positive steps had been made towards Apprenticeships, in that the College expected achievement to be above the national average.</p> <p>7.5. Students will be taking part in competition work, including the Beacon Awards, to benchmark themselves against other colleges. This was also now included as KPIs for Heads of Schools from 2024-25.</p> <p>7.6. The College was planning to reduce the volume of the QIP for 2024-25.</p> <p>7.7. As overall retention of adults (97.2%) was lower on long courses (92.9%), Governors requested that the summary retention showed the split between long and short courses, going forwards.*</p> <p>7.8. Governors queried why the overall pass rate target was lower, considering that achievement was at the same level as the previous year but with higher retention. This was a cautious target to address the challenges around the synoptic tests, requiring more re-sits.</p> <p>7.9. The Staff Council had found that some adult learners felt that there were less safeguarding provision provided to them, compared with 16-18 learners. As there had been a mix of views with most adults not wanting to complete safeguarding training modules (that related to their own safety), these had been made optional.</p> <p>7.10. However, the safeguarding processes at the College offered same level of support and access to both 16-18 and adult learners. It was agreed to publicise the safeguarding mentoring and support options to adults and the Staff Governors was requested to feed this back to the Staff Council.*</p>	<p><b>*Vice Principal</b></p>
<p><b>Resolved to</b></p>	
<p>7.11. <b>Accept the updates to the QIP 2023-24 and recommend it to the Governing Body for approval.</b></p>	<p><b>B: Governing Body (Appendix II)</b></p>

<p><b>8. Academic Policy: Work Experience, Industry Placement Policy and Procedure 2024-25 (Decision)</b></p> <p>8.1. This policy monitored Apprenticeship work experience.</p> <p>8.2. External monitoring platforms had also been considered but there were not currently enough students to account for the licence fees at this time.</p> <p>8.3. Two new Work Placement Officers had been appointed and were working hard to catch up on the administration.</p> <p>8.4. Governors queried which policy covered alerts for student non-attendance at work placements. It was currently in the Attendance Policy but would also be added to this policy.*</p> <p>8.5. It was confirmed that the policy would be included in the Apprenticeship induction.</p> <p>8.6. The Staff Governor felt that the timing of the work experience blocks could be disruptive as they often clashed with preparation of exams. It was requested to have them after assignments had been completed.</p> <p>8.7. They had been timetabled to have the least disruption, balanced against when employers could take students and allowing for tutor visits and post stretch and challenge exercises. It was recommended that the Staff Governors liaise with the Work Experience Team to work together to improve timing further.</p> <p><b>Resolved to</b></p> <p>8.8. <b>Agree and recommend the Work Experience, Industry Placement Policy and Procedure 2024-25 to the Governing Body for approval.</b></p>	<p><b>*Vice Principal (Completed)</b></p> <p><b>C: Governing Body (Appendix III)</b></p>
<p><b>9. Verbal Update of the Safeguarding Link Governors (Information)</b></p> <p>9.1. Heather Barrett-Mold and Stephen Way are the College's Safeguarding Link Governors, who meet regularly with the Vice Principal and the College's Safeguarding Officer.</p> <p>9.2. There had been 78 safeguarding issues raised, against 93 in the same period last year.</p> <p>9.3. The types of safeguarding incidents included safety issues travelling to/from the College and some concerns over suicidal ideation.</p> <p>9.4. There had been 7 social care referrals (6 Enfield, 1 Crystal Palace).</p> <p>9.5. It was clear to the Safeguarding Link Governors that safeguarding measures had been working well within the College.</p>	
<p><b>10. Link Governor Reports (Information)</b></p> <p>10.1. Heather Barrett-Mold as Horticulture Link Governor visited the Garden Design Team at Regent's Park in May 2024 and completed a feedback form to provide her observations.</p>	



<p>10.2. Although the form had worked well for this visit, it was deemed less appropriate for other areas. It was confirmed that the forms were not obligatory, as significant interactions could be represented elsewhere or, in other ways, to the Board.</p> <p>10.3. Governors felt that having a record would be useful to demonstrate engagement to Ofsted and other external reviewers.</p> <p>10.4. Other Governors visits were recorded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Lorna Fitzjohn had visited Forty Hall Farm with James Bryan in March 2024 to support curriculum planning.</li> <li>b) Sheila Cunningham had attended a Careers Day and provided feedback on the day to staff.</li> <li>c) Darrell DeSouza met with the Digital Team to discuss immersive technology.</li> <li>d) Darrell DeSouza visited Gunnersbury Park to meet with the Animal Management team, following the break in at the campus. His heart went out to all who had been affected by the break-in and the aftermath.</li> </ul> <p>Darrell also conducted a helpful discussion with the teaching staff to support consistency in lectures, which concluded with them factoring in 5 minutes of preparation before their lessons began.</p> <p>10.5. It was agreed to discuss options for a suitable process to record all Link Governor visits with the Governing Body in July 2024, which could include:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A Microsoft Form (as used for surveys) for Governors to complete themselves after each visit. This could have more or less detail, as appropriate, and would populate a spreadsheet that could be shared at each meeting.</li> <li>b) A table of visits within this report along with any feedback forms – dependent on Governors notifying the Director of Governance after each visit by email.</li> <li>c) Verbal updates in Committee meetings that are simply minuted.</li> </ul>	<p><b>*D: Governing Body</b></p>
<p><b>11. Academic Principal Risks (Decision)</b></p> <p>11.1. As more information was shared in the covering report for the Audit Committee (who oversee Risk), future reports will include the same information.*</p> <p>11.2. The risks of failure to keep courses relevant and failure to deliver a high quality estates infrastructure had risen.</p> <p><b><u>Ofsted Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p>11.3. Governors queried whether the Ofsted Monitoring Report should have demonstrated a gradual shift to more significant areas emerging.</p>	<p><b>*Governance</b></p>



<p>11.4. It was clarified that the context can be lost in the final judgements, where there would be a range within the Reasonable opinions from which the College had moved in an upward trajectory.</p> <p>11.5. The main aim now was to track progress through the updated QIP and position statements to make the case for demonstrating improvements.</p> <p>11.6. The Governors congratulated the College for the solid feedback from Ofsted.</p> <p><b><u>Keep Warm Activities</u></b></p> <p>11.7. The 'keep warm' activities for new students were now consistent cross-College, with one big 'Get Ready for Capel' event at each campus that included all areas celebrating together. The Staff Governor confirmed that the events had been much better than previous years and less tiring for the students who clearly enjoyed themselves.</p> <p>11.8. There had been some challenge around the accuracy of the expected numbers of students, which was difficult for the staff to manage. This would be considered for future planning.</p> <p>11.9. There had been a 90% attendance rate at Enfield and parents/friends had been invited which led to an increase in applicants.</p> <p>11.10. SEND students also required more personal support.</p> <p>11.11. New students were now being asked what else they might need to feel ready and they also received a monthly newsletter to keep their interest and to keep them informed.</p> <p>11.12. Social media campaigns on TikTok and Instagram had been rolled out and the Student Governor confirmed that they had been a success.</p> <p>11.13. The new development at Mottingham, which was close to completion, could be viewed through livestreaming on the College's website.</p> <p><b>Resolved to</b></p> <p>11.14. <b>Note and agree to the Academic Principal Risks.</b></p>	
<p><b>12. Landex Peer Review (Information)</b></p> <p>12.1. The Landex peer review 2023-24 resulted in the College retaining its full membership of Landex.</p> <p>12.2. Areas of good practice identified:</p> <p>a) Learners articulated excellent success stories, demonstrating positive impact, particularly for the most disadvantaged who may instead have become disengaged or not in education, employment or training (NEET).</p>	

<p>b) Teachers had high expectations for learners in lessons. This also impacted with learner's high career aspirations, such as jobs in Kew Gardens / London Zoo / University level courses.</p> <p>12.3. Areas for development identified:</p> <p>a) Consider marketing formally and organically to enable more people to take advantage of the College offer and careers in land and environment, aligned to Green Jobs and Skills in London and the industries the college serves.</p> <p>b) Review classrooms and learning spaces for practicality in capturing key learning and invest in whiteboards to support with cognitive load, capturing key terminology and learning points.</p> <p>12.4. Governors agreed with the importance of classrooms being properly equipped to inform teachers' expectations of how they can deliver their lessons.</p> <p>12.5. The classrooms at Crystal Palace had significantly improved and the well cared for rooms had encouraged students to respect how they also look after them.</p> <p>12.6. The land based courses were now being marketed in a better way through the College's social media platforms.</p> <p>12.7. A student not wearing their PPE had been brought up in the report, however, this had been a standalone incident with good rationale where the student had not been actively taking part in the lesson at that point.</p>	
<p><b>13. Curriculum Planning (Information)</b></p> <p>13.1. Art and Design courses were being delivered from September 2024 in the new creative art space of the College, which will be within the Floristry area at Enfield.</p> <p>13.2. The College were aiming to over-recruit staff to support any staff sickness.</p> <p>13.3. The student headcount chart showed significant growth in 2024-25 in the Animal Management cohort. Governors queried if there was capacity at the smaller campuses, such as Gunnersbury Park. It was clarified that the current classrooms had enough room for more students, there were just not enough space in the campus to build additional classrooms.</p> <p>13.4. The Mottingham shuttle bus was expected to increase student recruitment numbers due to ease of access to the campus.</p> <p>13.5. The Committee discussed recruitment pipelines via schools, which were now being actively targeted by the newly structured Admissions Team to look at school liaison and attend all key events to raise Capel's profile. 23 regional head teachers had also visited the College and some students had been referred by schools.</p>	

13.6. Stephen Way agreed to continue this liaison with an Enfield School that he worked closely with.	
13.7. Once final application numbers had been received, intelligence would be tracked back to assess what had, and had not, worked.	
<b>14. Student Disciplinary Report (Information)</b>	
14.1. There were 18 resolved Gross Misconduct Disciplinary Hearings for the year to date, compared to 22 incidents in the same time of the previous academic year.	
14.2. Governors noted that the types of incidents were significantly different to the previous year. There has been more group disciplinaries but there were no obvious trends identified.	
<b>15. Student Complaints Report (Information)</b>	
15.1. There had been 3 resolved complaints and one pending complaint, for the current year.	
<b>16. AOB</b>	
16.1. None.	
<b>17. Presentation by Sophie Guinness, Curriculum Leader in Garden Design, Garden Design (Enfield).</b>	
17.1. Sophie Guinness gave an in-depth presentation on Garden Design and Horticulture.	
<b>18. Date of next meeting</b>	
18.1. The next Academic Committee meeting will take place on Monday 18 November, 2024 at 1000.	

APPROVED MINUTES			
<b>CHAIR:</b>	Heather Barrett-Mold	<b>DATE:</b>	18 November 2024
<b>APPROVAL:</b>	<b>Remote confirmation:</b>  <b>Or signed:</b>		