

Minutes

Full Governing Body
Minutes

Meeting Time and Date	1500 on Wednesday 26 March 2025
Meeting Location	H1 Enfield Campus
Members in Attendance	Joanne Roxburgh (Chair), Darrell DeSouza MBE (Vice Chair), Aaron Davies, Alex Lane, Lorna Fitzjohn, Ralph Luck, Stephen Way, Sheila Cunningham, Sarah Moreland, Peter Doble, Peter Brammall (Principal)
Participants	Paul Smith (Deputy Principal & COO)
Director of Governance	Jennifer Swift

	Matters Arising
1. Welcome and Apologies	
1.1. Apologies were received from Guy Jones-Owen, Mei Lim, Richard Elliott (Student Governor), Sebastian Calver (Student Governor), Milana Uginciute (Student Governor), Joe Howarth and Nikki Barker.	
1.2. Zoe Halfyard, Denise Lloyd and Heather Marks sent their apologies due to delivering/attending the College-wide Ofsted training.	
1.3. No apologies were received by Paulina Balogun.	
2. Declaration of Interests	
2.1. No interests declared in relation to any agenda items.	
3. Minutes (Decision)	Governance (Completed) Governance
3.1. The Chair had highlighted in advance of the meeting that minutes 10.7 and 10.8 are duplicated. The Director of Governance confirmed that this would be amended.	Governance (Completed) Governance
3.2. A governor queried minute 6.12 and suggested that it is unclear on ESFA's official confirmation that the College meets the criteria and requested that the wording of this minute be amended to reflect this.	Governance (Completed) Governance
Resolved to	
3.3. Approve the minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 11 December 2024 as a correct record and authorise the Chair to confirm them.	
4. Matters Arising (Information)	SLT
4.1. The Board discussed the proposal from the previous meeting, that the College should monitor staff retention and noted that an update had not been provided. SLT confirmed that this would not be reviewed at each meeting, but the Board would receive an update	SLT

<p>in the July meeting to assess whether there had been any discernible change.</p> <p>4.2. The Deputy Principal commented that there was a noticeable reduction in staff turnover in the in-year data, which suggests that the implementation of the award had contributed to a reduction in turnover.</p>	
<p>5. Report of the Principal (Information)</p> <p>5.1. This paper provided the Board on key College developments and visits.</p> <p>General updates</p> <p>5.2. The DfE and FE Commissioner visited the College on 11th March to conduct the Annual Strategic Conversation which was attended by the Chair and SLT. Both the DfE and the FEC gave a positive assessment of the College's progress and praised the focus upon quality/improvement and the associated culture shift seen over the past year, along with the joined-up approach apparent between Board and SLT.</p> <p>5.3. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Placemaking of Enfield Council visited Forty Hall Farm on 14th March, along with the GLA's Deputy Mayors for Environment & Energy and Children & Families. The visit provided the opportunity to describe the development work taking place at the farm and the College's plans to ensure it can educate more Londoners about the environment, management of animals and green spaces, including the food production cycle.</p> <p>5.4. The visit also provided the opportunity for informal conversations with key influencers about the potential for Council/GLA support and funding, which would now be pursued.</p> <p>5.5. A discussion took place about appointing a Council member to the Board as one governor felt that this would not bring a great advantage due to often being conflicted out of decision making. The Board discussed the potential of appointing any Council member in a Co-Opted capacity or advisory role.</p> <p>Quality</p> <p>5.6. The Principal detailed the planned quality assurance activities that had been scheduled this term.</p> <p>5.7. RSM, the College's internal auditors, had completed audits on safeguarding and quality. The College had received 'substantial assurance' for both audits.</p> <p>5.8. The Landex visit report was awaited, along with that from the 'Deep dives' undertaken by Ofsted inspectors via FE Associates, which confirmed that the College was in the 'Good' zone, albeit there were still areas of consistency to work on. There had been positive feedback around the provision of support to students and PDBA had been suggested as in the 'Outstanding' territory, whilst areas for additional focus included attendance in some classes and some students' articulation of Fundamental British Values.</p>	

<p>5.9. Heather Marks, Deputy Principal, Quality & Curriculum joined the College on 17th March and whilst completing her induction will also focus upon any areas where the College can improve, building upon her vast experience as an Ofsted inspector.</p> <p>5.10. A governor reiterated what was discussed at the recent Audit Committee meeting about the difference between the audits carried out by the internal auditors and how they would differ from an Ofsted inspection. It was confirmed that Ofsted would be looking at the processes and paperwork with a greater level of depth, as well as speaking with learners about their experience. For this reason, the recent Deep Dives served as a better indicator as to how the College would perform under an Ofsted inspection.</p>	<p>People</p> <p>5.11. The Board was updated on recent appointments including Sam Black, Assistant Principal – Employer Skills Innovation & Growth and the new Head of HR.</p> <p>5.12. The Chair asked if the new Head of HR would be joining Board meetings as frequently as the Executive Director of HR used to and it was confirmed that that they will attend Finance and Resources Committee meetings to provide HR updates.</p> <p>5.13. The Board was informed that the academic management restructure is almost complete, with the final vacancy for Assistant Principal – Academic Excellence beginning on 31st March.</p> <p>Student Enrolments</p> <p>5.14. Following the 8% uplift in 16-18 enrolments achieved in the autumn, work continues to build upon this momentum with total applications up on last year and the January Advice Evening welcoming 210 prospective students, making it the highest attended Advice Evening to date, with 66 applications on the night, a 47% increase from the previous event.</p> <p>5.15. The Board had previously requested an update on apprenticeships, and the apprenticeships dashboard was shared during the meeting which showed an improvement year on year, with it expected to be above last year's achievement rate, which is in turn well ahead of the 55% National Average.</p> <p>5.16. The College has seen achievement rates increase over the past 3 years, whilst the overall size of the apprenticeships programme has slightly declined, reflecting the decision to focus upon quality improvement before targeting growth. The recruitment of the new Assistant Principal Employer Skills is part of the shift which will now see the College looking to expand its apprenticeship programme, with Sam Black also using his vast experience to look at the learner and employer journey in order to further improve the customer experience.</p> <p>5.17. A governor highlighted that the survey results highlighted that only 70% of learners knew who their assessor was and whether this contributes to the improved customer service narrative and asked if more checks and balances are being put in place on the quality front to ensure this feedback is not the norm.</p>
---	--

<p>5.18. The Principal confirmed that more checkpoints are now in place for apprenticeship learners: the start, mid-point and end of their programme. The Principal also provided further context on these exit surveys being undertaken by learners who had joined the College before improvements to quality were made, and the College should now begin to see improvements in student experience, as shown by the positive new entrant survey reported on.</p> <p>5.19. A governor requested that there are opportunities for more governor learning walks so they could triangulate the positive feedback they had heard from learners they had met at today's Strategy Day. The Principal said he would encourage governors to undertake these learning walks as part of their linked areas and confirmed that the Director of Governance will share a refreshed link role schedule following the meeting.</p> <p>5.20. The Board was pleased that Joe Howarth, the new Board member, would be able to compare these planned improvements with the apprenticeship offer compared to the previous arrangements and look forward to hearing whether he observes an improvement.</p> <p>5.21. A governor queried one of the areas from the survey and asked what the specific question had been, which the Principal agreed to identify and report back on.</p>	<p>Principal</p>

Financial and Estates

5.22. The quality of the financial statements and regularity audit service received by the College is reviewed each year. An evaluation of performance for the 2023-24 year was compiled and was approved as 'Good' by the Audit Committee on 27th February 2025.

5.23. The College SLT recommends the re-appointment of Buzzacott for a further two years and the service be re-tendered during 2026-27 and the rationale behind this was explained to the Board.

Resolved to

5.24. Approve Buzzacott as financial statement auditor for the current financial year 2024-25.

Other updates

5.25. The Principal informed the Board that one of the key discussions at the Committee meetings had been on Phase 2 of the Enfield project and how to proceed with this. It was suggested that a final review would take place at the summer round of meetings where the Board would decide if it wished to remain with the agreed strategy or change their approach once further information is received.

5.26. The Principal had met with Royal Parks and presented the proposal that was agreed at the last Estates meeting and it had been positively received. The Royal Parks will be appointing a new Chair in July and it is hoped that their Board will agree to work with the College to develop a joint masterplan for the campus which would represent a longer-term partnership and opportunity for a longer tenure than had previously been provided.

<p>5.27. A governor suggested that although there had been an increase in applications for both 16-18-year-olds and adult learners, consideration should be given to the financial risk of the lagged funding involved with the former.</p> <p>5.28. A governor described that they have heard of instances where Colleges are refusing 16-18-year-olds as they are unable to fund them and the College should ensure that they can accommodate these students without seeing a reduction in quality.</p> <p>5.29. The Board queried whether there is headroom in class sizes to accommodate these additional learners. Whilst it varies across curriculum areas, the Deputy Principal confirmed that the average class size is 15 and thus there is capacity to increase these class sizes, subject to the matching of additional students with those areas that were at or below this average figure.</p> <p>5.30. It was also highlighted that there is room for improved teacher utilisation as this is currently around 85% which should be factored in before considering additional teacher recruitment.</p> <p>5.31. The Principal also highlighted that consideration needs to be given to staff wellbeing and motivation, with common perceptions about excessive workloads, versus the fact that College teaching staff have lower expected teaching hours than the sector average; this will require improved benchmarking and communication to reflect these nuances.</p> <p>5.32. A governor asked if the relaxations around English and Maths qualifications will lead to a clawback in funding. The Deputy Principal is currently looking into this and will report back once more information is known.</p> <p>5.33. The College is projecting that by the end of the year they will maintain 'Good' financial health.</p> <p>5.34. The Deputy Principal informed the Board that SLT had developed a 50-point plan to help drive financial efficiency and growth whilst protecting quality and this had been shared with staff. Updates will be provided to future Finance & Resources Committee meetings.</p>	<p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>SLT</p>
<p>6. Apprenticeship Student Survey Results</p> <p>6.1. This was presented to the Board on an information only basis.</p> <p>6.2. There were no further questions on this as the Board had discussed apprenticeships both during the Strategy Day that had taken place on the same day as the meeting and in the earlier section of the meeting.</p>	
<p>7. Report of the Director of Governance</p> <p>7.1. This report provided the Board with current Governing Body updates and to seek approval of the proposed meeting timetable for the year ahead.</p> <p>Meeting Dates</p>	

<p>7.2. Governors were reminded that if proposed meeting dates by the Director of Governance and SLT do not work for them, they should let the Director of Governance know so that consideration can be given to moving them before they are approved at Full Governing body meetings.</p> <p>7.3. A discussion took place around the timing of meetings to ensure they are not planned during assessment periods to help students balance their studies with their role as governors. It was noted that the July meeting is set once students have finished their courses and therefore historically, they have not attended these meetings, so it is important that the timing of other meetings allow for their participation. The Director of Governance will meet with the student governors and discuss their experience on the Board and opinions on meeting dates.</p>	<p>Governance</p>

<p>7.13. All governors had been asked to contribute to this, and the input had been lower than what was hoped. It was agreed that this document could be reviewed on a rolling basis rather than annually to ensure more opportunities for governor input.</p> <p>7.14. A governor queried how many codes of good governance existed and the Director of Governance confirmed that there are 3 variations that the College can choose from.</p> <p>7.15. Resolved to</p> <p>7.16. Adopt the Code of Good Governance 2023-24.</p> <p><u>Committee Chair's group – Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>7.17. The Board was presented with the Terms of Reference for the Committee Chair's group. This group meets termly and is attended by Committee Chair's, the Chair of Corporation, the Principal and the Director of Governance.</p> <p>7.18. It was requested that a Terms of Reference was created for this group to provide clarity on the purpose of the meetings.</p> <p>Resolved to</p> <p>7.19. Adopt the Terms of Reference for the Committee Chairs Group.</p>	
<p>8. Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee Minutes (Decision)</p> <p>8.1. The Board was provided with a verbal update of the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee meeting that had taken place on 30th January 2025.</p> <p>8.2. In addition to the Board appointments that had been approved earlier in the meeting, the Board agreed to appoint Darrell DeSouza as Chair of the Academic Committee.</p> <p>Resolved to</p> <p>8.3. Approve the appointment of Darrell DeSouza as Chair of the Academic Committee.</p> <p>8.4. The Board was presented with the Whistleblowing and Complaints against the Corporation policy which had been recommended for adoption.</p> <p>8.5. Resolved to</p> <p>8.6. Adopt the following policies:</p> <p>a) Whistleblowing Policy (standing)</p> <p>b) Complaints against the Corporation Policy (standing)</p> <p>8.7. The Chair of Search and Governance thanked Lorna Fitzjohn for accepting the position of Vice Chair of Search, Governance & Remuneration.</p> <p>8.8. The Chair reiterated the Director of Governance's earlier request of increased governor contribution to the Code of Good Governance.</p>	

<p>8.9. It was noted that Paulina Balogun had been appointed as a member of the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee but had not been in attendance at the meeting. No apologies had been sent.</p>	
<p>9. Audit Committee Minutes</p> <p>9.1. The acting Chair provided the Board with a verbal update on the Audit Committee meeting that had taken place on 27th February 2025.</p> <p>9.2. The Committee recommended that the Board reappoint Buzzacott as financial statement auditor for the current financial year 2024-2025.</p> <p>9.3. The Committee also recommended that the Board approve the GDPR policies to the Governing Body for adoption.</p> <p>9.4. A governor queried the extent in which the College has taken legal advice on the document retention policy that has been shared for approval. This policy states that documents will be retained for a period of 5 years and clarity has been asked on why this timing has been stated. Reference was made to Estates documents having a lifetime of 12 years if under seal and 6 years if signed.</p> <p>9.5. It was requested that the Board does not approve this policy until clarity is provided on the period of 5 years stated. The Data Protection Officer is the author of these policies, and the Director of Governance will seek some clarity on this.</p> <p>9.6. A governor also queried where these documents are kept and how they are referenced. Their own personal experience was shared of some documents being with the College and others with solicitors and can this prove problematic if there is a change in Solicitor and the College should consider trying to gain possession of these documents.</p> <p>9.7. It was also suggested that a number of policies come to the Board every year for re-approval and the Board should ask for some assurance that these policies are reflective of any updates and the Board made aware of what process is followed.</p>	<p>DPO</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>Deputy Principal/DPO</p>
<p>Resolved to</p> <p>9.8. Appoint Buzzacott as financial statement auditor for 2024-25.</p> <p>9.9. To adopt the GDPR policies as follows:</p> <p class="list-item-l1">a) Data Protection Policy (standing)</p> <p class="list-item-l1">b) Data Breach Policy (standing)</p> <p class="list-item-l1">c) Subject Access Request Policy (standing)</p> <p class="list-item-l1">d) Freedom of Information Request Policy (standing)</p> <p class="list-item-l1">e) Information Security Policy (revised)</p>	

<p>10. Academic Committee minutes</p> <p>10.1. The Chair of the Academic Committee provided a verbal update to the Board of the Academic Committee meeting that had taken place on Tuesday 4th March.</p> <p>10.2. The Committee was pleased to see the improvements in attendance which had been a key priority for them. The Committee was keen to find out the reasoning behind this and it was attributed to stronger processes, better quality of teaching and learning, good data capture and positive retention, along with a number of complementary strategies developed by the Attendance Working Group.</p> <p>10.3. It was also discussed in the meeting that there appears to be caution around predicted achievement in some areas due to the optimistic predictions that were given last year.</p> <p>10.4. The Chair also acknowledged that English and Maths remain an area which needs improvement and this had been discussed.</p> <p>10.5. The Committee had been presented with the AI policies for staff and students but chose not to agree and recommend these for Board approval as there were some concerns around the consistency between the policies. Instead, these were approved as a first draft and further changes were requested to them.</p> <p>10.6. A member of the Committee requested that their apology for their absence be recorded.</p>	<p>Governance (Completed)</p>
<p>11. Estates Committee Minutes (Information)</p> <p>11.1. The Committee Chair provided the Board with a verbal update on the meeting that had taken place on 3rd March 2025.</p> <p>11.2. The Committee had recommended that Phase 2 of the Enfield project proceed on a single phase but this will be reviewed in the summer meeting once additional information has been received.</p>	
<p>12. Finance & Resources Committee Minutes (Information)</p> <p>12.1. The Committee Chair provided the Board with a verbal update of the meeting that had taken place on 7th March 2025.</p> <p>12.2. With regards to the Enfield project, the Committee recommended proceeding on a single-phase basis, with the caveat that they could switch to a phased approach in summer 2025, if it was felt that this was the better option upon receiving further information.</p> <p>12.3. The Committee Chair highlighted that the Board has to decide whether they want to invest the £3 million it has in financial reserves to the Hessayon project or whether they want to retain the money for other additional projects that may need prioritising.</p> <p>12.4. The Committee also had a detailed conversation about restoring the farm's financial viability and a meeting will be held at the farm in the summer term to explore the options in more detail. A governor queried if the lease documents for the farm had been reviewed yet and if an update could be given to the Board.</p>	<p>Principal</p>

<p>12.5. The Principal confirmed that the first meeting with the farm working group will be exploring the range of potential things that could be done at the farm.</p> <p>12.6. The Committee had been presented with the FLEX 2 forecast and highlighted that although a smaller surplus is expected the College will still be in good financial health and is requesting that the Board approves the updated forecast.</p>	
<p>13. AOB</p> <p>13.1. A governor asked if the new academic management structure could be shared with the Board. The Principal confirmed that the new structure will be shared as soon as it is finalised.</p> <p>13.2. There was also a request that lease agreements will be added to the agenda for the July meeting.</p>	<p>Principal</p> <p>SLT</p>
<p>14. Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>14.1. The next Full Governing Body meeting will take place on Wednesday 9th July 2025 at Crystal Palace campus.</p> <p>14.2. Apologies were sent from Stephen Way for the July Full Governing Body meeting.</p>	

APPROVED MINUTES			
CHAIR:	Joanne Roxburgh	DATE:	9 th July 2025
APPROVAL:	<p>Remote confirmation: Approved</p> <p>Or signed:</p>		