Minutes

Full Governing Body
Minutes

Meeting Time and Date	**15:00 on Wednesday 25 March 2026**
Meeting Location	**In person**
Members in Attendance	Joanne Roxburgh (Chair or Corporation), Darrell DeSouza OBE (Vice Chair of Corporation), Peter Brammall (Principal), Mei Lim, Joe Howarth, Alex Lane, Alex Kent-Jones, Aaron Davis, Guy Jones-Owen, Sabri Ozaydin, Dennis Hone CBE, Fusun Can (Staff Governor), Ralph Luck OBE, Sheila Cunningham, Stephen Way
Participants	**Paul Smith (Deputy Principal & COO), Heather Marks (Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality)**
Director of Governance	Jennifer Swift

	Matters Arising
1. Welcome and Apologies 1.1. Apologies were received from Lorna Fitzjohn, Aziz Ahmed and Sarah Moreland.	
2. Declaration of Interests 2.1. No interests were declared in relation to any agenda items.	
3. Minutes (Decision) 3.1. A governor requested that the date in minute 7.16 is corrected from 2020 to 2026. 3.2. A change in wording from 'requested' to 'noted' was made to 10.3. **Resolved to** 3.3. **Approve the minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 10th December 2025, as a correct record and authorise the Chair to confirm them.**	
4. Matters Arising (Information) 4.1. The Board was provided with an update on matters arising from the last meeting. There were no queries in relation to any of the updates.	
5. Report of the Principal 5.1. This report provided an overview of key College developments including those not already covered by the recent round of Committee meetings. <u>Ofsted Inspection</u> 5.2. The final Ofsted inspection report was shared with governors prior to the meeting. The Principal reported that the result had	

resonated across the organisation with much celebration, joy and relief across all campuses. 5.3. Governors were informed that the scheduled CPD session which was due to take place three days after the inspection was converted to a 'Staff Wellbeing Day' which had been well received by staff. 5.4. Formal celebrations are planned at each campus, with a cross-College event included alongside the annual staff Awards event in July. The Principal invited governors to attend any of the upcoming celebrations. 5.5. A governor had noted the data published in the Ofsted report was from 2023-24 and whether the 2024-25 data which was stronger, had been taken into consideration. The Executive team confirmed that the most recent data had been recognised during the inspection. 5.6. Governors acknowledged that there were several areas where the College were almost considered strong. Many governors expressed disappointed that Leadership and Governance was not one of those areas, given the scale of change over such a short period of time. It was confirmed that the small pocket of inconsistencies that had resulted in these areas not being considered 'Strong' would become a key priority. 5.7. The Board also acknowledged that some of the evidence the College had prepared to facilitate the inspection had not been taken into consideration and this may have hindered the ability to demonstrate these areas being 'Strong'. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality reported that there was a general feeling that being one of the first College's to be inspected under the new framework, inspectors may have been overly cautious in their grading. 5.8. Governors also voiced concern over the wellbeing of staff during the inspection given that this new framework was considered to improve this. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality had fedback to Ofsted about the pressure the large number of inspectors present had on a small middle management team of 5 staff. 5.9. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality who was the nominated lead, reported that she was well supported by the Principal & Deputy Principal & COO during the inspection and thanked them for their support. 5.10. It was also acknowledged that attendance issues which had been cited in the report are a societal issue and therefore although the College can take steps to improve this issue, they cannot be held solely responsible. 5.11. The College is aware of its areas for improvement and the granular level of detail provided in the Quality Improvement Plan allowed both Ofsted and governors to be assured of this. <u>Matrix Re-accreditation</u>	

5.12. The College was reinspected by Matrix Assessors on 6th March as part of the annual Continuous Improvement Checks under the Matrix standard and the College's Matrix accreditation has been maintained. Visit England Reassessment 5.13. The Principal explained that this involves the College being assessed as a business attraction against a strict set of criteria. 5.14. Whilst this year's result of 76% was higher than last year's (73%), some maintenance works are required to the estate and toilet facilities to be able to retain the high rating in future. Annual Strategic Conversation 5.15. The College's Annual Strategic Conversation took place on 13th March, with the Chair, Deputy Principals and Principal joined by senior colleagues from the DfE, FE Commissioner and GLA to review the College's progress, impact and future plans. This was a very positive dialogue with much praise from the DfE and FEC for the changes and new trajectory seen at the College. 5.16. The Board was reminded that now the College is no longer a 'Requires Improvement' College, the FEC would no longer be attending the Annual Strategic Conversation. Strategy Day 5.17. The Principal confirmed that the next iteration of the Strategy, following the discussions that had taken place during the Strategy Day, would be presented at the next round of Committee meetings for approval. **Resolved to** 5.18. **Note the updates provided.**	
6. An update from the Chair of the Search, Governance and Remuneration Committee 6.1. The Board was reminded that following advice from Eversheds Sutherland, the Board would ensure that all governors approve any decisions during meetings by a show of hands or similar, rather than on a decision by exception basis. Reporting Templates 6.2. Following a suggestion from one of the Chairs' Planning Group meetings, a template had been circulated to all Chair's to support feedback to the Board at Full Governing Body meetings. It was confirmed that there is no expectation that Chair's will use this. Board Portal 6.3. The Committee had reviewed the Board Portal service provider and agreed that they were happy to remain with the service provider. **Resolved to**	

6.4. **Approve OneAdvanced as the Board Portal Service provider for 2026-27.** Code of Good Governance 6.5. The Code had been reviewed in the meeting, and a suggestion was made to include as evidence of complying to the Code, that there is high governor engagement at the College. 6.6. It was also suggested that the Code should include reference to all decision-making being student-centric. **Resolved to** 6.7. **Approve the updates to the Code of Good Governance.** Policies for approval 6.8. A governor highlighted that the Whistleblowing Policy needed to be amended where any reference was made to the ESFA. These changes had been made to the version presented to the Board for approval. **Resolved to** 6.9. **Adopt the Whistleblowing and Complaints against the Corporation Policies.**	
7. Report of the Director of Governance 7.1. This report sought approval of the proposed meeting timetable and provided current Governing Body updates. Application of the College Seal 7.2. It is proposed that the College seal is applied to a framework agreement contract for levy-funded apprenticeship training following the College's successful procurement exercise to become an approved apprenticeship provider for Hertfordshire County Council. 7.3. A governor noted that the College Seal had not been applied since the last meeting, which would mean that this had not been applied to the Contracts and Collateral Warranties from the Enfield project contractors. 7.4. The Deputy Principal confirmed that the contracts had been signed but the application of the seal had not been requested. 7.5. A governor advised the management team it was important that when the Contracts with the Building Contractor and the Consultants are signed that they are signed as Deeds, using the Seal if appropriate, in order to secure 12 years of liability otherwise there would only be 6 years. 7.6. Another governor queried the use of the seal and was surprised to hear that this requirement is not obsolete, given that so many contracts are now signed electronically. 7.7. The Director of Governance commented that Eversheds Sutherland had reported that the application of the seal does cause	**Governance**

confusion at many institutions and would circulate some guidance on this for governors. Governor Training 7.8. Governors were reminded to complete the Fraud Prevention and Anti-Bribery training on iHasco. Governors were also reminded of the free training courses available on the ETF website which are available. Written Resolution 7.9. Governors had approved, via written resolution, the appointment of the contractors for the Enfield Project on 29 January 2026 and some budget changes to the Enfield and Mottingham projects (although overall budget remained unchanged). These decisions were time critical, and therefore the Board had been asked to approve this via written resolution. 7.10. A paper had been prepared in advance by the Deputy Principal & COO and had been circulated to the Board. **Resolved to** 7.11. **Note the updates in the report.** 7.12. **Approve the application of the College Seal to the Framework Agreement Contract for levy-funded apprenticeship training.**	
8. An update from the Chair of the Estates Committee Crystal Palace Campus 8.1. It was queried whether there was any update on the date the College would need to vacate the stadium. The Deputy Principal & COO confirmed that the College has been asked to vacate the stadium for a two-year period, and the planning application has now been submitted. It is expected that the works will not begin until at least October 2026 with the area the College is leasing, highly likely to not need vacating before December 2026. 8.2. The College has submitted their planning application to the GLA, and are progressing to tender in parallel with this. Once this has taken place, the Board will be asked to approve any recommendations. 8.3. The Committee had discussed whether the College needed planning permission for the works that were proposed or whether these would be considered as permitted development. Fusion had agreed to investigate this and report back at the next meeting. Gunnersbury Park Campus 8.4. It was confirmed that the Heads of Terms on the lease had now been agreed and the College is in the process of negotiating details on the lease.	
9. An update from the Chair of the Academic Committee 9.1. The Chair reported that one of the key discussions at the meeting had been the Ofsted inspection. The Committee was pleased to	

hear the commitment to push onwards and consolidate the strong performance, by establishing greater consistency across the College in the strive for 'Exceptional'. 9.2. There had been a discussion on whether skills contribution reporting should be delivered to the Finance & Resources Committee and/or the Academic Committee. It was agreed, given the financial imperative on this area, it would be more appropriate to be discussed at Finance & Resources. However, the Academic Committee asked for clarity on how they could ensure that this area still remains under the scrutiny of the Academic Committee. 9.3. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality explained that the Assistant Principal's meet weekly, and that updates on Skills Contribution would be shared via papers for the Academic Committee. 9.4. It was suggested that it would be useful to have a scorecard to summarise progress on this area and a request was made that the Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality and Assistant Principal, Employer Skills, Innovation and Growth could deliver a joint update in 2026-27 outlining the progress in the area. 9.5. The Committee Chair acknowledged that the Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality had introduced some strong quality assurance elements, including quality summits and termly performance reviews. 9.6. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality added that Heads of Curriculum are held to account on a monthly basis where there is scrutiny of indivudal learner attendance, progress and assessments. These monthly meetings service as a mock session for the Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance meetings. 9.7. Governors queried heads of curriculums wellbeing during these newly introduced sessions and it was reported that these are supportive meetings and heads of curriculum are supported via coaching sessions. 9.8. The Committee had discussed retention rates and the Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality confirmed that these rates are strong and tracking above last year's data. 9.9. The Committee had queried whether there was any update on the HE Strategy and it was confirmed that as part of the College's full review, meetings had taken place with the College's HE partner (Royal Agricultural University) to discuss and develop new HE pathways. <u>Risk around staffing</u> 9.10. Whilst oversight of this risk sits within the remit of the Finance & Resources Committee, it was noted that this also presents a risk to the Academic Committee, and therefore it was agreed that reporting of this risk could be developed to include the risk to teaching and learning. <u>Safeguarding</u>	

9.11. The Safeguarding link governor had completed the Single Central Record check, and this will be presented at the next Academic Committee. 9.12. Another governor commented that the new inclusion of a column detailing how incidents were followed up in the Safeguarding report, a suggestion made by the Safeguarding link governor, had been a good development. 9.13. A governor queried whether learners who fail to achieve their English and maths GCSE's struggle to find employment and it was confirmed that this can be a barrier. The Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality commented that this had been a common query from parents at the open day and the College is reviewing the ways in which they can support English and maths learners on their courses. 9.14. It was also suggested that guest speakers can help highlight the importance of English and maths qualifications and following the Easter break there would be a guest speaker discussing growth mindset and resilience. 9.15. Heads of Curriculum have also been asked to plan trips and visits following the Easter term to keep learners engaged and improve attendance in the summer term.	
10. An update from the Chair of the Audit Committee 10.1. The Committee Chair had requested that individual Committees were asked to suggest any areas they would like to see audited in future. This had occurred during the Spring term round of meetings. <u>Outstanding Audit Recommendations</u> 10.2. The Committee Chair commented that this report is a dynamic document that provides transparency and opportunity to understand whether any recommendations can be closed or whether further work remains. 10.3. Whilst some of these recommendations appear to have been on this report for a long time, it was confirmed that these areas are being actioned, but will remain tracked, until the College is satisfied that the appropriate progress has been made. <u>Risk Register</u> 10.4. The risk register had been reviewed at the meeting and there was discussion as to which of these risks could be downgraded following the Ofsted inspection and progress in other areas. 10.5. The risk surrounding sustainability remains a red risk, and the College confirmed that this is an area of focus in the summer term. 10.6. The Committee had reviewed the evaluation of the External Audit Service and confirmed this as 'Good'. It was agreed in March 2025 that the Board would approve Buzzacott for an additional two years, due to a period of various change at the College with the	

leadership team, internal auditors and the implementation of the new finance system. **Resolved to** 10.7. **Approve the re-appointment of Buzzacott as Financial statement auditor for the current financial year 2025-26.** **Internal Audit Plan** 10.8. The Board was updated on the scheduled internal audits and it was confirmed that JISC would be auditing the College's cyber security in November. The Committee felt that they would like assurance on this area prior to this date and therefore a smaller audit on cyber risk has been arranged for the summer term. Policies Approval 10.9. The policies for annual review had been presented to the Committee with no suggested changes. 10.10. The Deputy Principal & COO had asked RSM to confirm there were no changes needed to the Anti-Bribery and Fraud Prevention Policies and none were identified. **Resolved to** 10.11. **Approve the GDPR and Fraud Prevention and Anti-Bribery Policies.**	
11. An update from the Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee 11.1. The Committee Chair informed the Board that the farm plan was still outstanding. The Principal confirmed that until the College is aware of the options available to them, a meaningful farm plan could not be presented. The College is currently meeting with potential funders and positive progress has been made in this area. It is anticipated that an update on this would be provided at the summer term Committee meeting. Employer Focused Income Generation Strategies 11.2. It was confirmed that this would now appear as a standing agenda item at the Finance & Resources Committee meetings. The Committee was updated on some of the key progress in this area including a 56% increase in income generation but noted that the forecast had fallen short of the ambitious targets that had been set by the Directorate. Financial Position 11.3. The College's financial position was affected by a reduction in student numbers and withdrawals being higher than anticipated along with a decrease in funding. Debtors 11.4. The Committee had queried the ongoing issue around debtors and although there had been a slight improvement, this remained an area of focus. The implementation of the new finance system	

should allow better analysis of debtors, particularly those who pay via installment Report from the Head of Human Resources 11.5. The Head of HR had been in attendance to update the Committee on some of the key updates in HR. 11.6. The Committee was pleased to hear of the improving position within HR, however queried the ongoing issue around the use of agency staff and sickness levels, which although are in line with sector average, present challenges for the College. 11.7. Risk 11.8. The Committee had highlighted the risk around the recruitment of 16-18 year olds, and commented that the College was behind schedule against previous years. The Principal confirmed that whilst the College is behind on new applications, conversions and progressions are stronger this year and therefore net conversions are up 2.3% for 16-18 year olds and 7% for adult applications. 11.9. The College will be promoting the College's recent Ofsted success through their social media challenges to target new learners. In addition to this, the College has introduced a strategy which involves accepting offers and inviting learners to a series of activities in the build up to the enrolment period so new learners feel embraced. 11.10. The College will continue to focus on increasing new enrolments, but also ensuring that the conversion from applications to enrolments remain high.	
12. AOB 12.1. Governor Awards 12.2. The Chair of Corporation raised the idea of introducing a governor awards and the staff and student awards, and this could be particularly useful ensuring that there is an additional opportunity for people who are consistently nominated and fail to miss out on the staff or student awards. 12.3. The Committee Chair queried if there was anything else the governors would like to award and it was suggested that people demonstrating persistence or resilience, or people who have gone above and beyond ion their role could be awarded. 12.4. The Corproation Chair asked for any other suggestions for the governor award to be shared with her. 12.5. Strategy Day Next Steps 12.6. The Chair thanked all governors for their input in the Strategy Day that had taken place prior to the Board meeting and acknowledged that there are competing priorities which present complexities. 12.7. It was confirmed that the Executive team would take away the suggestions from the discussions and present an updated Strategy at the summer term round of Committee meetings.	

13. Date of Next Meeting 13.1. The next Full Governing Body meeting will take place as part of the on Wednesday 15th July 2026 at the Regents Park Campus.	
14. Farewells **<u>Farewell to Guy Jones-Owen</u>** 14.1. The Chair thanked Guy for his commitment to the College over the years in various capacities as a governor and independent member of the Audit Committee. 14.2. The Principal presented Guy with a bottle of Forty Hall Farm's wine and lifetime membership at Capel Manor Gardens. 14.3. Guy thanked the Board for such an enjoyable experience serving as a governor and that he was pleased to see the College in such a great place, being led by an exceptional team.	

APPROVED MINUTES			
CHAIR:		**DATE:**	
APPROVAL:	**Remote confirmation:** **Or signed:**		