MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE GROUP

CORPORATION BOARD MEETING
Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2023
Pitching Room, IoT, Bletchley Campus
17:00 – 19:00

Board Members	Category of Governor	Attendance Record 2023/24	Present at this meeting
Sally Alexander	CEO	1 of 1	Yes
Richard Bartlett-Rawlings	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Alan Cook	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Mat Gotkowski	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Sean Hainsworth	Staff	1 of 1	Yes (Teams)
Leroi Henry	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Jacob Jempson	Student	1 of 1	Yes
David Meadowcroft (Chair)	Independent	0 of 1	No
Rebecca Myrie	Staff	1 of 1	Yes
Amit Nayyar	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Angie Novell	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Ruby Parmar	Independent	1 of 1	Yes (Teams)
Ian Revell	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Neil Sainsbury	Independent	0 of 0	No
Manish Verma	Independent	1 of 1	Yes (Teams)
Jeremy Wilsdon	Independent	0 of 1	No
Tom Wraight	Independent	1 of 1	Yes
Shalom Lloyd (resigned 22.8.23)	Independent	0 of 0	
Attendance % this meeting		88%	14/16
Attendance % year to date		88%	14/16

Attendees at this meeting: Alex Warner (Principal: Curriculum Innovation and Pedagogy), Jason Mansell (Chief Operating Officer), Karen Brown (Head of Governance), Sam Samuels (Governance Partner), Maxine Bennett (Lead Director, Prison Services), Amy Langford (Group Director: Inclusion and the Student Experience) (in part)

1.0 Procedural

1.1 Welcome and Apologies
- Alan Cook, who chaired the meeting, welcomed Leroi Henry, Rebecca Myrie, Amit Nayyar and Tom Wraight to their first meeting and they briefly introduced themselves. Alan also welcomed Amy Langford to the meeting.
- David Meadowcroft and Jez Wilsdon had sent apologies. Neil Sainsbury will be absent until 31st January 2024 by agreement.

1.2 Declaration of Interests
None

2.0 Strategic Priorities 2023/24

There was a change in the order of agenda items

2.2 Safeguarding & Prevent *(previously circulated as Paper 2.2)*

Amy Langford, who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) referred to the last meeting where she had briefly presented the Annual report on Safeguarding & Prevent. Amy reminded governors of their responsibilities for safeguarding, key headlines from 2022/23 and the start of term.

Headlines from 2022/23

1. MKGG is compliant with all Safeguarding and Prevent statutory duties. The Internal Auditors judged the controls relating to Health, Safety and Safeguarding to be 'Adequate' (June 2023) (recommendations have since been implemented).

2. Behaviour and Disciplinary Policies were reviewed. There were 12 exclusions.

3. The College increased the number of Designated Safeguarding Officers.

4. The number of reported safeguarding incidents reduced by 20%. Over 80% of incidents cited mental health as a primary or secondary reason.

5. There continues to be an ongoing, close partnership with Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Safeguarding and Prevent agencies in MK

6. Future considerations:
   - Introduction of a Duty Manager role
   - Responding to increasing knife crimes (consultations with partner agencies, staff and students).

7. Ian Revell is the Link Governor for Safeguarding and Prevent and has regular meetings with the DSL for additional assurance.

Developments this term

1. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) was updated in September with an increasing focus on children missing or absent from education, filtering and monitoring (e.g., the College uses Smoothwall to monitor digital activity), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and honour-based violence.

2. The significant and unexpected growth in 16-19 students (many at Level 1), is creating a disproportionate increase in safeguarding and wellbeing referrals.

3. Additional training on key aspects of KCSIE has been cascaded to all Heads and Deputies of Schools (Curriculum) and Functions (Business Support).

4. A mobile knife arch will be implemented from 9th October.

5. A new Duty Manager role has been implemented (where a member of the extended Leadership Team models positive behaviours).

6. The DfE Regional Prevent Lead reviewed the College's action plan. The DSL will be attending a round table to review information sharing in the region.

Next Actions

1. Ongoing training

2. Monitoring the impact of unexpected growth e.g., resourcing, ensuring the campus is safe.

3. Managing and responding to feedback on the implementation of the knife arch

Governors asked questions:

Are we obliged to refer to the x-ray screening as a knife arch?

We want to be transparent. However, the College is taking advice from its PR agency and Thames Valley Police on the communications and language.

How are staff and students responding to the introduction of a knife arch?

It has made a small number of staff feel anxious because they have (incorrectly) assumed that there is a problem in College. No concerns have been raised through Peakon (employee staff survey).

It is expected to create a learning experience i.e., stimulate awareness and discussions with students.

The Student Governor added that the arch will be a visual reminder that weapon-based crime is an issue in Milton Keynes, but its existence would make students feel safer in College.

What will be the inference if someone refuses to undertake the screening?

The screening is not mandatory however, the DSL would have a conversation with the individual and if they still refuse, a stop and search may be necessary.

If the College locates a weapon, what happens next?

The College would contact the police and remove the student from the premises. Last year two students were searched, and one was found to be carrying a weapon (flowchart in Annex 1).

With the unexpected growth in student enrolments this year, are staff numbers adequate and workloads manageable? Is additional resource needed?

We are monitoring and have identified a need for an additional wellbeing role.

> ***Why would someone volunteer to be screened if they are carrying a weapon and know it will be detected?***
>
> It will be a deterrent. Statistics tell is that approximately 1% of students may carry a weapon and we need to identify these 30 or so students. If they know a weapon will be detected, it should deter them from bringing it to College.

Governors requested an update at a future meeting including the number and type of incidents, how the College is responding and resourcing.

Action 1: Amy Langford

The Board received the update including the assurance that the College is meeting its responsibilities for Safeguarding and Prevent.

2.3 **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** *(previously circulated as Paper 2.3)*

Amy Langford referred to the last meeting where she had briefly presented the Annual report on SEND. Amy reminded governors of their responsibilities for SEND key headlines from 2022/23 and the start of term.

Headlines from 2022/23

1. The College is meeting its statutory responsibilities with regards to the SEND Code of Practice.

2. 2022/23 saw a steady increase in the number of students with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) and those in receipt of High Needs Funding. Further growth in 2023/24 was anticipated.

3. SEND and High Needs students achieved in line with their peers except for students with social, emotional and mental health (who achieved slightly below their peers).

4. Vocational achievement for High Needs Funded (HNF) students on mainstream programmes in 2022/23 was 86% (85% in 2021/22).

5. Inclusive Learning provision is self-assessed as Outstanding (Grade 1). Improvement actions for 2023/24 relate to work readiness.

6. High Needs provision is self-assessed as good.

7. Angela Novell is the Link Governor for SEND and meets regularly with the Director of Inclusion for additional assurance.

Developments this term

1. There has been a higher-than-expected increase in students with EHCPs and High Needs in mainstream provision (increased by 50% and 100% respectively). We expect the numbers to fall as we reassess individual needs in a College setting.

2. The number of Inclusive Learning students has remained the same.

Next Actions

1. Respond to the Council's Expression of Interest to increase provision of high needs

2. Create an additional Wellbeing role (making use of catch-up funding) to respond to a 40% increase in wellbeing assessments.

3. Explore additional roles e.g., we will be piloting a role to work with students with conduct disorders and supporting them to be more independent in their learning.

The Board received the update including the assurance that the College is meeting its responsibilities for SEND

Amy was thanked for attending and she left the meeting

2.1   **CEO's Report** *(previously circulated as Paper 2.1)*

Sally Alexander highlighted some key points from her report.

New Approach for Board Meetings

- In response to governor feedback, there will be fewer agenda items and more in-depth discussions. A new Dashboard, with RAG ratings, will include a succinct update, at every meeting, on the KPIs and strategic priorities.
- 2023/24 KPIs will be brought to a future meeting for approval.
- Governors endorsed this approach and requested an explanation of the RAG ratings.

Action 2: Jason Mansell

Student Enrolments

- Study Programme enrolments (16-18) are c.600 above target / allocation. This is good news and in line with the overall growth strategy; however this higher-than-expected growth this year has an impact and cost implication across several areas of the College e.g., the student experience, staff recruitment and workloads, room availability, catering and cleaning etc.
- Due to the lagged funding model, the College will not be paid for students above allocation until 2024/25 unless the ESFA approve in-year growth funding (which will not be known until the end of the year).

Staff Pay Award

Minuted as confidential

RAAC

The College commissioned a RAAC expert who has confirmed that all College buildings are RAAC free.

Governors asked questions to which Sally responded:

What is the reason for the significant growth this year?

The College anticipated larger demographic growth last year and modest growth this year however, the opposite has been true. The highest growth is at Level 1 (Skills Academy), which is a challenging cohort.

Possible reasons are:

- Two schools in Milton Keynes have closed their sixth forms.
- GCSE grade boundaries are higher this year so more students did not receive high enough grades to proceed to sixth form.
- Where students fail English and maths (especially maths) at school, they are coming to college to retake.
- Last year, cost of living pressures meant that some students had to find work rather than continue in learning. This position may have eased.
- The AoC has suggested a post COVID bounce-back
- Students want an adult college experience rather than a school experience

Governors added that it would be interesting to understand the reasons by asking students e.g., is the IoT raising the reputational brand of MKCG?

Is unexpected growth a FE national picture?

The AoC is reporting that it is a national trend.

Governors added that the College should consider capping the growth if it will adversely impact the student experience.

The Board reviewed and noted the CEO Report

2.4   **Student Experience (Campus)** *(previously circulated as Paper 2.4)*

Alex Warner led on this item.

Context

- Predictions were shared with the Board at the July meeting; the predictions were cautiously optimistic (based on various indicators) recognising there were more externally assessed and examined qualifications this year which were subject to final validation / results.

- The achievement data included in Paper 2.4 is as of 26th September and as there are c.300 students re-sitting exams / re-submitting coursework, the achievement rates could still go up or down.

Self-Assessment Review (SAR)

- The College is completing the rigorous self-assessment process. Curriculum Link Governors attended SAR validation reviews and CQG members will have an opportunity to scrutinise the Whole College SAR and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in more detail.

- From our SAR, we have assessed the College's Overall Effectiveness to be 'good' i.e., *We are a 'good college where learners achieve well. Those learners*

with protected characteristics or learning differences overwhelmingly achieve well and in line with their peers.

- Every school has maintained or improved its provision / achievement rates compared to last academic year. Inclusive Learning and ESOL continues to be Grade 1 (Outstanding) and all other Schools are Grade 2 (Good). Two Schools (Care & Health / Construction & Built Environment) are now good having improved achievement rates by circa 4 percentage points.

Student Achievement / KPIs (data as of 26th September)

- Whilst College stretch targets have not been met in every case, overall, there has been an improving trend compared to last academic year. In some areas, whilst the College has outperformed the sector, it has aspirations to do even better.

- Headline achievement for 16 -18 and Adults has improved.

- GCSE maths results were disappointing; GCSE Maths High Grade Achievement was 15% which is well below the College's target but equal to national rates.

- GCSE English High-Grade Achievement (Grade 4 and above) was 29%. This is just below our target but 6 percentage points above national rates

- English and maths Functional Skills achievement is likely to exceed target representing an improvement since last year.

- Attendance is below target (and post the pandemic is a reported issue across colleges and schools). Attendance in English and maths is lower than vocational attendance.

- Higher Education achievement is lower than last year. It is a small cohort, so a few learners have a significant impact on achievement rates. This is timely achievement i.e.; the learners are expected to pass but not until after the reporting deadline.

- Timely Apprentice achievement
  - 55% of apprentices completed their qualification by the agreed end date (known as the hybrid end date). Those Apprentices still on their apprenticeships will continue and will achieve their standards, this will be after the hybrid end date so cannot be included in the 2022/23 data.
  - Some Apprentices, on a four-year standard, were made redundant during COVID so are counted as not having achieved.
  - Some apprentices have not completed End Point Assessments (EPAs) by the hybrid end date for reasons both within and outside the College's control:
    - Awarding Organisations are under-resourced and are unable to meet the demand for EPAs
    - The portfolios of 37 electrical installation apprentices have not met the required quality so further work is needed
  - Without being complacent, Timely Apprenticeship achievement is four percentage points better than most colleges (sector average is 51%).
  - The DfE published a report 'Apprenticeships Evaluation 2021 – Learners' in March 2022 including reasons for why apprentices do not complete (page 22 of the report).

- There needs to be more opportunities for external and independent work experience.

- 16-18, Adult and Apprentices satisfaction levels are around or above target. Higher Education satisfaction is below target. Employer Satisfaction is 'Excellent'.

- 'Good or better Educational Experiences' is at 81%. This relates to observations of teaching in the classroom and reflects:
  - 81% of teachers received a positive judgement
  - 16% of teachers received actions to improve
  - 3% of teachers received priority actions to improve

Quality Improvement in 2023/24

- The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) will come to the next Board meeting for approval after scrutiny by the CQG. The identified areas for improvement are:
  - Attendance across all provision
  - Maths GCSE Achievement
  - Apprenticeship Timely Achievement
  - Independent and external work experience linked to careers
  - Performance in external exams (particularly L2 Motor Vehicles / L2 Electro Technical)

Governors asked questions to which Alex responded:

> ***What action is being taken to address the issue with End Point Assessments?***
>
> The College is exploring options to get students through the EPAs e.g., taking learners out of the area / weekend assessments.
>
> It is a sector issue and the DfE is undertaking a review of the capacity of EPA organisations.
>
> Alex will report back to governors.
>
> **Action 3: Alex Warner**

> ***How many students require work experience, who is responsible for finding employers and what networks do they use?***
>
> Ideally, every 16-18 learner needs to develop their professional skills, so this equates to over 3,000 learners. Work experience should be independent, and career related i.e., a non-related part-time job does not count. The target for 2023/24 is 100%.
>
> T-Level students require a 315 hours (45 days) relevant work placement (across their two-year programme).
>
> If students are not 'work ready', or work experience cannot be found, the College will organise work related activity e.g., guest speakers, industry visits.

The College's Business Development Team has a key role in employer engagement. When contacting a new employer, they will explore opportunities for:
- Apprenticeships
- Industry Placement
- Work Experience
- Guest speaker / sponsor

The College has contacts with c.8,000 employers (of which c.2,000 are active).

Governors can (and do) help through their networks.

There is increasing competition from other colleges.

Are apprenticeship opportunities increasing or reducing?

Apprenticeship starts are increasing year on year. We currently have c.1,000 apprentices on programme.

What is the context of the failed portfolios of 37 learners. Was it based on a sample? Did it fail our internal quality review process?

It was initially based on a sample but now we have been asked to review and resubmit all 37. It is a quality issue which was not identified internally but fundamentally relates to a resourcing challenge (it is difficult to recruit experienced electricians who can teach and undertake internal quality assurance).

The College has appointed a new Group Director: Quality and Teaching & Learning Improvement (who will attend the next Board meeting).

You have expressed disappointment with Maths GSCE High Grades Achievement at 15%; were you expecting this?

Last academic year the Achievement was 23% and following mock exams, we were confident that we could meet our target of 26% based on last year's pass mark of 135. However, the pass mark this year increased to 158. This increase of 23 marks meant that many of our students did not achieve Grade 4 even though they had improved.

The Board received the update on Student Achievement

2.5   **Prison Education Service (PES)** *(previously circulated as Confidential Paper 2.5)*

Minuted as confidential

3.0   **GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**

3.1   **Capital Projects Monitoring Group (CPMG) meetings 19th July 2023 and 20th September 2023** *(previously circulated as Paper 3.1)*

Manish Verma, Chair of the CPMG referred to the report of the meeting. All capital projects are on time and budget. The Committee had reviewed its Terms of

Reference and recommended that Peter Cox (co-opted governor) be given temporary voting powers.

The Board approved:
- ***The report from the CPMG meetings of 19th July and 20th September 2023***
- ***The CPMG Terms of Reference for 2023/24***

4.0   CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved by consent / without discussion:

4.1   Minutes of the last meeting (12th July 2023) *(previously circulated as Papers 4.1 and Confidential 4.1A).*

The Board approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 12th July 2023

Matters arising: None

4.2   Policies *(previously circulated as Paper 4.2)*

The Board approved the:
- ***Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy (revised)***
- ***Persistent, Unreasonable or Vexatious Complaints Policy (new)***

4.3   College Seal 2022/23 *(previously circulated as Paper 4.3)*

The Board approved the report on the use of the College Seal in 2022/23

4.4   Board Business Plan 2023/24 *(previously circulated as Paper 4.4)*

The Board approved the Board's Business Plan as a working document and noted the main items for the next meeting:
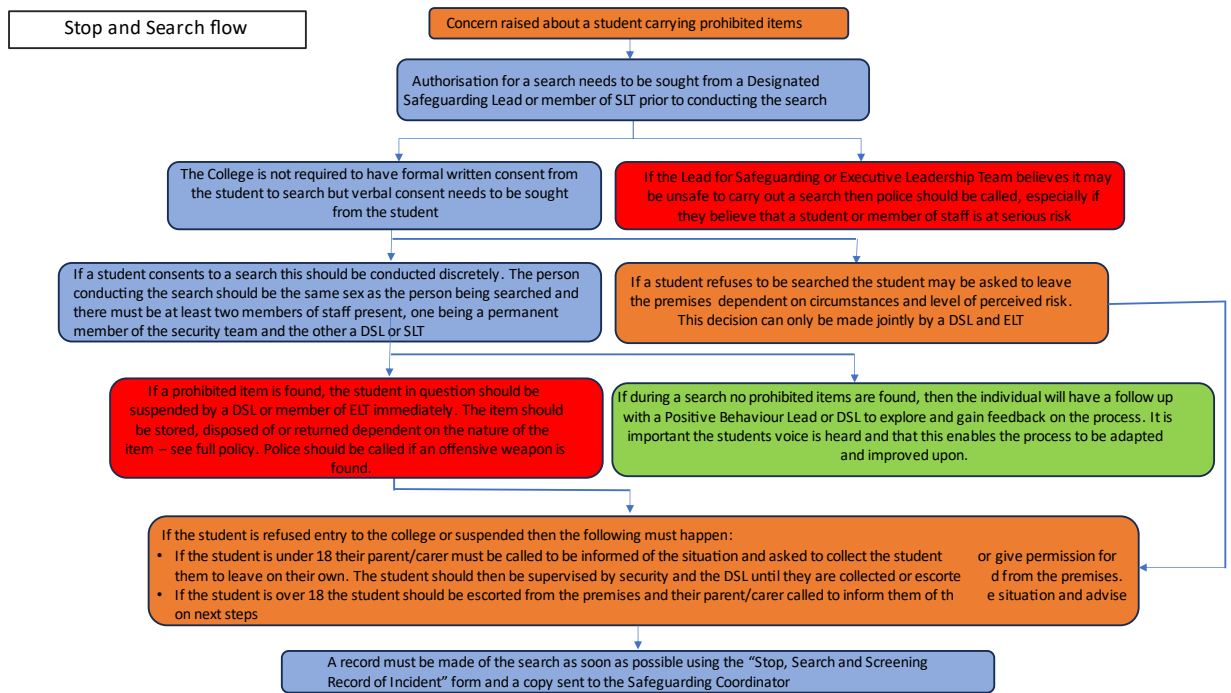
- Student Experience including Campus SAR. QIP, KPIs, Stakeholder Feedback
- IoT Strategy, KPIs and Action Plan
- Student recruitment 2023/24 (including headline impact on the budget)

Next Meeting: 8th November 2023

Approved 8 November 2023
Chair of Governors – David Meadowcroft

Stop and Search Procedure

Stop and Search flow

Concern raised about a student carrying prohibited items

Authorisation for a search needs to be sought from a Designated Safeguarding Lead or member of SLT prior to conducting the search

The College is not required to have formal written consent from the student to search but verbal consent needs to be sought from the student

If the Lead for Safeguarding or Executive Leadership Team believes it may be unsafe to carry out a search then police should be called, especially if they believe that a student or member of staff is at serious risk

If a student consents to a search this should be conducted discretely. The person conducting the search should be the same sex as the person being searched and there must be at least two members of staff present, one being a permanent member of the security team and the other a DSL or SLT

If a student refuses to be searched the student may be asked to leave the premises dependent on circumstances and level of perceived risk. This decision can only be made jointly by a DSL and ELT

If a prohibited item is found, the student in question should be suspended by a DSL or member of ELT immediately. The item should be stored, disposed of or returned dependent on the nature of the item – see full policy. Police should be called if an offensive weapon is found.

If during a search no prohibited items are found, then the individual will have a follow up with a Positive Behaviour Lead or DSL to explore and gain feedback on the process. It is important the students voice is heard and that this enables the process to be adapted and improved upon.

If the student is refused entry to the college or suspended then the following must happen:
• If the student is under 18 their parent/carer must be called to be informed of the situation and asked to collect the student or give permission for them to leave on their own. The student should then be supervised by security and the DSL until they are collected or escorted from the premises.
• If the student is over 18 the student should be escorted from the premises and their parent/carer called to inform them of the situation and advise on next steps

A record must be made of the search as soon as possible using the "Stop, Search and Screening Record of Incident" form and a copy sent to the Safeguarding Coordinator

Screening Procedure

Screening using the Knife Arch flow Operation of arch facilitated by Security and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Knife arch enabled for 30 minutes. All students/staff and visitors asked to empty pockets and walk through the arch

Staff and visitors are not subject to the remainder of the flow but we encourage them to lead by example

Individual places items in the trays and walks through the arch

Individual opts out of screening

Individual passes through the arch with no alarm and continues with the day

Arch identifies potential weapon, search required.

Search refused

Conversation with the DSL about the rationale for screening and searching

Consent obtained for search

No prohibited items identified

If a weapon is found this should be confiscated if possible and the police should be called immediately. The student should be detained if they are compliant but may leave premises if they attempt to do so

The College may refuse to have the student on the premises dependent on circumstances and level of perceived risk. Decision made by DSL on a case by case basis

If the student is refused entry to the college or suspended then the following must happen:
• If the student is under 18 their parent/carer must be called to be informed of the situation and asked to collect the student or give permission for them to leave on their own. The student should then be supervised by security and the DSL until they are collected or escorted from the premises.
• If the student is over 18 the student should be escorted from the premises and their parent/carer called to inform them of the situation and advise on next steps if there is a safeguarding need

A record must be made of the search as soon as possible using the "Stop, Search and Screening Record of Incident" form and a copy sent to the Safeguarding Coordinator. Please see policy for full details