

MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE

SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (S&G)

Draft Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3 March 2026,
Teams 16:00 – 17:15

Committee Members	Attendance Record 2025/26	Present at this meeting
Sally Alexander	2 of 2	Sally Alexander
Ruby Parmar	1 of 2	<i>Sent apologies</i>
Ian Revell (Chair)	2 of 3	Ian Revell
Neil Sainsbury	2 of 2	Neil Sainsbury
Lindsey Styles	2 of 2	Lindsey Styles
Total Percentage attendance (this meeting)	80%	4/5
Total percentage attendance (year to date)	90%	9/10

In attendance: Karen Brown (Head of Governance), Sam Samuels (Governance Partner)

1.0 PROCEDURAL

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

Ian Revell welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Ruby Parmar.

1.2 Declaration Of Interests:

There were no declarations.

2.0 BOARD EFFECTIVENESS AND PERFORMANCE

2.1 Board Composition and Membership *(previously circulated as Paper 2.1)*

Karen Brown highlighted the headlines in the report.

Composition and membership

- There are no current vacancies.
- Three governors are approaching the end of their current term, and all have indicated that they will be applying to serve a further term:
 - Amit Nayyar and Tom Wraight will complete their first terms in August 2026
 - Ruby Parmar will complete her third term in January 2027.
- There are no Committee vacancies.

Diversity and Skills

- The Board currently has no significant skills gaps and there is a good spread of experience across the public and private sectors. Cyber security and AI are emerging areas of strategic risks and strengthening Board expertise in these areas will become increasingly important.

- Female representation remains below target. Of the 14 Independent Governors, 10 (72%) are male and 4 (28%) are female, below both the Board's target (50%) and the sector average (46%).
- Ethnic diversity (43%) is above the student profile and significantly above the sector average (18%). The Board target is 50%.
- Diversity considerations will continue to inform succession planning, however, the Committee reaffirmed that relevant skills and experience remain the primary factor in recruitment decisions.

Committee Discussion, Decisions and Actions

- **Second Term Applications**

The Committee agreed that Amit Nayyar and Tom Wraight should be invited to submit applications for a second term. Both have strong attendance and are up to date with mandatory training (which will, in future, be a requirement for re-appointment).

Action 1: Karen Brown by June 2026

- **Exceptional Circumstances – Chair of Governors**

At the next meeting, the Committee will consider the application of "exceptional circumstances" and make a recommendation to the Board. There is increased sector scrutiny on adherence to good governance practices, including limiting terms of office.

Action 2: Karen Brown by June 2026

- **Committee Membership**

Going forward, all newly appointed governors will be expected to serve on a committee or scrutiny group from the outset.

For existing governors, the expectation is that all governors serve on a committee or scrutiny group within three years of joining the Board (i.e. it is a condition of re-appointment).

The Head of Governance will discuss suitable Committee roles with the two governors who do not currently serve on a committee.

Action 3: Karen Brown by June 2026

- **Potential New Candidate**

A prospective candidate will meet informally with the CEO and Head of Governance next week. As no vacancies currently exist, they will not be asked to apply or attend an interview at this stage but will be added to the database for future consideration. Co-opted governors will similarly be asked whether they wish to be added to the database.

Action 4: Karen Brown by June 2026

- **Cyber Security and AI Skills**

Cyber security and AI will be added to the list of desirable Board skills. A co-opted governor has recently taken on the Link Governor role for cyber and data security and currently provides assurance to the Audit & Risk(A&R) Committee. The A&R Committee will be asked to recommend whether cyber and AI should be a future Board discussion item, in which case the Link Governor should be invited to attend.

Action 5: Audit & Risk Committee on 27 March 2026

- **Mandatory Training**

Timely completion of mandatory training within two months of enrolment (without requiring chasing), is an existing Board KPI.

The Committee confirmed that no exemptions will apply to mandatory safeguarding training, even if a governor has completed safeguarding training in other educational or

professional context. Allowing an exemption would set a precedent and the alternative training would need to be assessed which would be time consuming.

The Executive Director of People Services and Marketing is reviewing the mandatory training suite.

The Committee reviewed Board composition, Committee membership, skills and diversity, and agreed a series of actions to strengthen governance, succession planning, and Board capability.

2.2 Board Development Plan and KPIs (previously circulated as Paper 2.2A)

Karen Brown highlighted the headlines in the report:

Development Actions - The Board approved its Development Plan and Governance KPIs in November. Several of the development actions cannot be measured until the Board completes its annual self-assessment in July / August.

KPIs:

- Board attendance and completion of mandatory training: currently rated as green.
- Governance (Ofsted Grade): currently rated as amber (i.e. 'Expected' standard). Actions are planned actions for this cycle which should improve the standard to 'Strong' (See Paper 2.3).
- Diversity KPIs: currently rated amber or red. With no current vacancies, there is no opportunity to improve these metrics.
- Link Governor visits: currently rated red, There is insufficient evidence of visits taking place. Although the policy intended that governors would report on visits during the extended Board time, this has happened infrequently.

Committee Discussion, Decisions and Actions - Link Governor Visits

- Paper 2.3 emphasises the need for 'evidence' to demonstrate effective governance practice e.g. to Ofsted. The ad hoc feedback process on Link Governor visits is not providing the evidence and needs to be formalised.
- The following actions were agreed:
 - a) The Committee Chair will remind governors of the importance of completing and recording Link Governor engagement (Board KPI). Ofsted will want to explore the impact of the Link Governor support and challenge.
Action 6: Ian Revell on 18th March 2026
 - b) The Governance Partner will circulate a simple template for recording Link Governor engagement.
Action 7: Sam Samuels by 18th March 2026
 - c) The Head of Governance (HoG) will add Link Governor feedback to the forthcoming governance triumvirate meeting (Chair, CEO and HoG). An improved reporting process may include a monthly report compiled by the Governance Partner and / or reporting at Board or Committee meetings by exception.
Action 8: Ruby Parmar, Sally Alexander, Karen Brown on 16th March 2026

The Committee reviewed the Board Development Plan and KPIs and agreed actions to review reporting on Link Governor visits.

2.3 Board Effectiveness: Governance and Ofsted (previously circulated as Paper 2.3)

Sam Samuels highlighted the headlines in the report:

- The Committee had requested more information on Ofsted's definition of 'Exceptional Governance'.
- The previous single overall effectiveness judgement has been replaced with a multi-grade Report Card containing 15 separate grades. Each evaluation area is awarded one of five grades: Urgent Improvement, Needs Attention, Expected, Strong, or Exceptional. Governance standards are assessed within the Leadership & Governance evaluation area:
 - Expected: All eight standards must be fully evidenced (three include governance – See Annex 1). This is known as a *secure fit*.
 - Strong: All Expected criteria must be fully evidenced, plus six additional criteria (one includes governance – See Annex 1).
 - Exceptional: Requires sustained evidence of very high standards over time and actions that have had a transformational impact on learners' and apprentices' progress, development, and wellbeing. There must be no significant weaknesses, and the organisation should be sharing learning and best practice externally.
- The Expected grade represents a high bar. Among the four FE College inspection reports published so far, two colleges were graded as Expected for Leadership & Governance and two were graded as Needs Attention. Of the 60 grades awarded:
 - 0 were Exceptional
 - 3 (5%) were Strong
 - 46 (77%) were Expected
 - 11 (18%) were Needs Attention
 - 0 were Urgent Attention
- A cross-college leadership group is meeting half-termly to review the toolkit. Governance is currently self-assessed as Expected, with actions in place to elevate this to Strong by the end of the calendar year including governance actions.
- The new framework places greater emphasis on inclusion, safeguarding, and wellbeing, ensuring every learner is supported to thrive. Ian Revell, the current Link Governor for Safeguarding, is being shadowed by Ian Bickers, who will be the Safeguarding and Inclusion Link Governor from August 2026

Committee Discussion, Decisions and Actions

- The Committee reviewed and agreed the proposed next steps.
- Ofsted will expect governors to triangulate information provided by Leaders (e.g. Link Governor engagement with clear evidence of challenge and impact) (see actions 6 and 7 above) and / or attending a CPR (Curriculum Progress Review) meeting to observe the robustness of the process.
- Governors must complete mandatory Safeguarding and Prevent training in a timely manner (which is an existing governance KPI).
- Robust, verifiable evidence will be required to demonstrate that each standard has been met.
- Ofsted awareness training for governors is scheduled for 6th May. Business plans (for the Board and CQG) are being reviewed to confirm that governors receive assurance across all relevant areas,

- Questions relating to the new governance standards will be incorporated into the Board’s annual self-assessment questionnaire in July. This will identify any gaps in knowledge or confidence.

Action 9: Karen Brown and Sam Samuels by 1st July 2026

- The Committee proposed revisiting the extension to Board meetings to consider a more structured agenda (with minutes), giving an opportunity for Link Governor feedback. The Head of Governance will discuss this with the Chair of Governors.

Action 10: Karen Brown on 16th March 2026

The Committee reviewed the new Ofsted toolkit, agreed the next steps

3.0 CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved or recommended to the Board for approval, without discussion:

3.1 Policies

The Committee reviewed and recommended the following policies to the Board for approval

- a) ***Board of Governors Training & Development Policy*** (previously circulated as Paper 3.1A)
- b) ***Board of Governors Policy and Procedures for Obtaining Independent Professional Advice*** (previously circulated as Paper 3.1B)
- c) ***Board of Governors Recruitment and Re-appointment Policy*** (previously circulated as Paper 3.1C)
- d) ***Complaints against the Corporation Policy*** (previously circulated as Paper 3.1D)

3.2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2025 (previously circulated as Paper 3.2) **were approved.**

Date	Actions Arising	Current Status
21 October 2025	1. Recommended the re-appointment of Richard Bartlett-Rawlings and Jez Wilsdon to the Board for approval.	Complete
	2. Link Governors - Provide a template for verbal feedback to the Board.	Superseded (see item 2.2 and action 7)
	3. Provide more information on the Ofsted definition of ‘exceptional’ governance (highest level).	Complete: Item 2.3
	4. Reissue the self-assessment questionnaire in April to inform the Board Development on 6th May 2026.	Superseded (see item 2.3 and action 9)
	5. Publish released minutes (previously deemed confidential) on the website.	Complete
17 June 2025	1. Explore if ‘substitute’ Student Governors could be elected who could step in should a vacancy arise (not an issue with Staff Governors)	Complete: included in Paper 2.1

4 March 2025	3. The Chair of Governors will speak directly to the Student Council about the role of the Board and / or make a video.	Carry Forward – The Chair will attend a Student Council Meeting next academic year. (In the meantime, Ruby has filmed a Transmit video for staff and a short film for the website).
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4.0 GOVERNANCE

4.1 Items for the next meeting are:

- Board Development Plan / KPIs (progress)
- Board Composition / Succession Planning (including CoG) / Board re-appointments
- Terms of Reference 2026/27
- Committee Business Plan 2026/27
- Election of Vice-Chair(s) for 2026/27
- FE Code of Governance – self-assessment for 25/26
- Committee membership & Link Governors 26/27
- Planning self-assessment 2026 and annual reviews
- Governor Role Descriptions
- Feedback from Governor Induction / Onboarding Survey

NEXT MEETING: To be confirmed (change of date)



Approve 16 June 2026
Chair of Search and Governance – Ian Revell

Ofsted Standards which refer to Governors / Governance

See [Further education and skills inspection toolkit](#) for further information

Expected	Strong	Exceptional
Leadership and governance meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply:	Leadership and governance meet the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply:	Inspectors may consider leadership and governance to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply:
2. Governors and/or those responsible for oversight make sure that leaders have a clear vision and strategy and manage resources well. They support and challenge leaders appropriately, giving due regard to their wellbeing and workload .	1. Leaders, governors and/or those responsible for oversight have a detailed insight into the provider's strengths and areas for development . This ensures that their strategic priorities are sharply focused , and that any remedial actions they take have a sustained impact on the quality of provision for learners and apprentices.	1. Exceptionally high standards of leadership and governance have been sustained. Governors and/or those responsible for oversight, other leaders at all levels, and all staff make a strong, positive contribution to the provider's strategic priorities, leading to continued improvement and/or sustained high standards in all areas of the provider's work.
3. Leaders, governors and/or those responsible for oversight make decisions that are in the best interests of learners and apprentices, in particular those who are disadvantaged , those with SEND or high needs, those who are known (or previously known) to social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, including those without level 2 English and/or mathematics.		
4. Governors and/or those responsible for oversight have a generally accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum, teaching and training, including any subcontracted provision . They work with leaders to monitor and refine actions they have taken to make improvements.		
Met or Safeguarding – Met or Not Met		
Leaders and those responsible for governance and/or oversight ensure that staff are appropriately supervised, supported and monitored. Where the conduct and behaviour of staff are not appropriate, leaders take action.		
Leaders and those responsible for governance and/or oversight have resolved any minor safeguarding incidents identified during the inspection or are taking steps to resolve them.		