



MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 6th March 2024, at 6.00 pm via remote link

Present:

Tim Oliver (Chair)
Sophie Cook
Dan Hards, Principal
John Thater
Emma O'Brien
Claire Douglas
Carl Egginton

Catherine Davies (Clerk)
Sagar Patel, Deputy Principal, (Advising Officer)
Kate Parsons, Assistant Principal, (Advising Officer)

1. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests from Trustees.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were accepted and received from Paul Collyer.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of 8th November 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

5.1 The Principal introduced the draft Admissions Policy 2025, advising the Committee that the main changes as outlined in the Rational for Changes document were:

- Continuing to offer guaranteed status to Chessington Community and Richmond Upon Thames School.
- Offering guaranteed applicant status to KT6 in addition to KT7, KT8 and KT10.

The Principal added that the entry requirements for admission to the College will remain the same to ensure inclusivity.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Admissions Policy 2025 to the Board of Trustees for approval.

5.2 The Assistant Principal introduced the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2024 and updated the Board on staff leadership changes regarding EDI and gave an overview of how the guidance for

stakeholders is being slimmed down to ensure it's clear how the Policy goals are implemented. The Director of Safeguarding and EDI has joined the Op Dev Committee to ensure all College policies and procedures are checked for discriminatory components.

A Trustee suggested the following amendments:

The word "intentions" is used in Point 1 but not throughout the document.

Inputting the word "inclusion" into the Goals.

Amending the wording in point 1.6 to signify everyone is welcome at ESFC except someone who is intolerant of an inclusive environment.

The Committee approved the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2024 subject to the changes in the wording as outlined above.

5.3 The Deputy Principal introduced the 3 Staff Procedures and Staff Code of Conduct and noted that it has been many years since these policies were reviewed by the Committee. The HR Department has sought advice from the SFCA to ensure the documents are in line with current best practice. Trade Union advice has been sought to ensure an employee who is a Trade Union Representative is not a subject of victimisation. The policies have also been approved by the SLT.

The Deputy Principal outlined the changes to the Capability Procedure which include professional review targets and point 6.3 outlines the procedure if an employee's performance improves but is not maintained.

The Committee approved the Capability Procedure 2024.

The Deputy Principal introduced the Disciplinary Procedure 2024 and highlighted clarification regarding establishing the immediate facts of the case, ensuring the possibility of eliminating bias when selecting an investigating officer and ensuring the duty of care for an employee who is under suspension.

A Trustee suggested changing the wording in Point 4.5 regarding eliminating bias "as far as possible" when selecting an investigating officer and the Deputy Principal agreed.

The Committee approved the Disciplinary Procedure 2024 subject to the small change in wording in Point 4.5.

The Deputy Principal then turned to the Grievance Procedure 2024 and commented that in Point 3.5 that impact of the Policy will be monitored with reference to protected characteristics and the length of time to arrange a formal grievance hearing has been extended.

The Committee approved the Grievance Procedure 2024.

The Deputy Principal introduced the Staff Code of Conduct 2024 and added that this document has been drawn together by the HR Department who reviewed Staff Code of Conduct's at a range of S7 Colleges. The Board noted Point 2 regarding interaction between staff and students via College based platforms only and Point 9 regarding Professional manner.

The Committee approved the Staff Code of Conduct 2024.

The Chair thanked the Senior Leadership Team and HR Department for their hard work in updating the policies and procedures that clarified processes going forward and ensured best practice.

5.4 The Assistant Principal introduced the Careers Education and Guidance Statement of Intent which has had a small number of changes made to it since it was last reviewed. The College continues to expand the number of careers guidance appointments that it makes available to students, any student can request an appointment and the Progression Guidance Department also targets different student groups such as EHCP, Bursary students etc. The increase in capacity of appointments also helps the College achieve the Gatsby Benchmark 8. The Assistant Principal added that students are offered 4 opportunities to have contact with employers during their time at the College.

The Committee approved the Careers Education and Guidance Statement of Intent.

6. CONSTITUTION

6.1 Role of Vice Chair

The Chair asked the Trustees to consider taking on the role of Vice Chair with a hand over period pencilled in for the Summer Term.

6.2 Skills Audit

The Clerk advised the Committee that the Skills Audit 2024 will be circulated shortly.

Action: Clerk to circulate Skills Audit 2024.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Principal reminded that Committee that the Strategic Plan 2026-2029 will be considered by the Committee at the meetings during 2025 ready for Board approval in December 2025.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair noted that the next meeting is scheduled for 12th June 2024 at 6pm.

*The meeting closed at 6.35 pm.
Attendance was 87%.*

Signed.....

Date.....

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

1	Clerk to circulate Skills Audit 2024.
---	---------------------------------------

SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR CHALLENGE [C] / SUPPORT [S]

C/S	Minute	Topic
C	5	A Trustee suggested changing the wording in Point 4.5 regarding eliminating bias “as far as possible” when selecting an investigating officer and the Deputy Principal agreed.
S	5	The Chair thanked the Senior Leadership Team and HR Department for their hard work in updating the policies and procedures that clarified processes going forward and ensured best practice.