

**Orchard Hill College Committee meeting  
Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 4.00pm (Held virtually)**

Present: David Hobday, Chair (DH)  
Michele Humphreys, Vice-Chair (MH)  
Kelly Phillips, Principal (KP)  
Ric Adams (RA)  
Akansha Arya (AA)  
Neil Mears (NM)

In attendance: Peter Lauener (PL) (Chair of OHC Board of Trustees)  
Shakira Rajbali (SR) (Head of Integrated Services)  
Sue Curran (SC) Management Accountant  
Tracey Goodsell (TG) (Clerk)  
Kirsty Cottrell (KP) (Assistant Principal)  
Craig-Van-Der Veld (CV) (Regional Lead)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Melissa Shepherd.

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

DH welcomed Peter Lauener, Chair of the OHC Trustee Board to the meeting. PL said that he was delighted to join the meeting at a time when physically visiting the centres is not possible. He said he was looking forward to hearing about the excellent work that has been taking place this term.

DH also welcomed SR to the meeting.

**3. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations made. TG asked those governors that had not yet completed their annual Declaration of Interest form to do so and send it to her by email.

**4. Skills Audit**

TG asked those governors that had not yet completed their annual Declaration of interest form to do so and send it to her by email.

**5. Constitution and Appointments**

i) Governors were asked to propose the appointment of the Chair of the Committee until autumn term 2021. DH had indicated that he was willing to stand again. Other nominations were invited and none were received.

Governors unanimously **AGREED** to recommend the appointment of DH as Chair of the OHC Committee until autumn term 2021.

ii) Governors were asked to propose the appointment of the Vice Chair of the Committee until autumn term 2021. MH had indicated that she was willing to stand again. Other nominations were invited and none were received.

Governors unanimously **AGREED** to recommend the appointment of DH as Chair of the OHC Committee until autumn term 2021.

Governors **NOTED** that these appointments would be ratified by the OHC Board at their next meeting.

iii) Governors **NOTED** that Iain Chadwick had resigned as staff governor with effect from 14.7.20. KP said she would give consideration as to who could be approached to fill this role.

iv) Governors **NOTED** that Neil Mears and Akansha Arya were re-appointed for a further three year term of office with effect from 3.7.20.

## **6. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **7. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **8. a) Principal's Report**

### **1. Introduction**

KP said that this had been another challenging term but despite this, attendance has been good and effective learning has continued. Some students have received a letter stating that they are in the 'extremely vulnerable' category but some of those have chosen to continue to physically attend College.

The College has moved to on-line systems for many areas that were previously very 'paper-heavy', such as enrolments and virtual open days.

Whilst it had been disappointing to cancel the annual awards ceremony at Epsom Downs, the College had organised drive-by events for students which had worked really well. In future, this will continue, to provide an opportunity to present awards to those students that cannot access the venue at Epsom Downs.

## **2. Student Numbers**

KP said that student numbers are good. The College is funded for 254 students and there are currently 247 on roll.

## **3. Staff Development**

The decision to have a two week half term in October proved to be a prudent one given the current Covid situation. One of the weeks was used as a mandatory training week for staff, with most sessions held on-line, but face-to-face sessions held for Manual Handling and Team Teach. 24 members of staff attended and surveys indicate that 87% of staff thought the training was good or better.

DH asked whether some of these initiatives would continue Post Covid. KP confirmed that much would continue as it has provided better access for students.

PL asked about those students that are self-isolating and how many of those are accessing virtual learning. KP confirmed that there are less students at home this time than there was during the previous lockdown, but there is a full timetable of online learning, with at least one session per day. Pre-recorded sessions are also available. There are intervention plans in place and lecturers keep in contact with their students on a weekly basis. Therapy sessions have also been delivered virtually and are working well.

PL asked how the lecturers stay in touch. KP said that some of this is done face-to-face and there are also some safeguarding visits. KP confirmed that this blended model will be permanent going forward.

Governors commended the college staff on how they have coped with this huge change to the delivery model.

## **4. Safeguarding**

KC reported that the College has introduced a recovery curriculum for students returning to College. Transition can prove difficult for some students, so coping techniques learned can be used for other circumstances such as hospital admissions. There has been evidence of positive impact in attitudes and engagement in sessions.

Mental Health referrals have increased and partnerships are strong with organisations such as Barnados and Uplift Sutton. Most referrals are from Sutton and the College is working very well with them. There is an intervention plan which sits alongside the Safeguarding and Well Being offer.

Weekly Safeguarding meetings have been introduced and these have helped with attendance and welfare. Some staff have visited students' homes, including for food deliveries.

KC said re-elections have taken place for the Safeguarding ambassadors. There is one in each centre and they meet half-termly. This has been a positive experience

for students during lockdown. Evie, a student at Wyvern has been doing fantastic job developing the student accessible policies and bursaries.

DH asked why there were more mental health referrals from Sutton. KC explained that the cohort is slightly different. There are a higher number of students with a SEMH profile and underlying mental health issues that have been exacerbated by the lockdown.

## 5. Health and Safety

Governors noted that there is a system to log Covid cases. 18 people were tested positive for the virus at Wyvern centre, which was closed down on the Friday before the two week half term period. It is back open now and all staff have returned.

## 6. Estates

KP reported that there have been 3 big builds taking place including a new build at Camberwell Rd, improvement works at Beaconsfield which are now complete and Nightingale, which is a purpose built building upstairs to Nightingale Community Academy School. There have been significant delays to these works, particularly at Nightingale which is now one term behind. The school have been very helpful and have let the College use some of their space in the school until the works have been completed.

## 7. HR

Governors noted that there have been 38 new starters who have received an on-line induction.

KP invited further questions.

PL thanked KP for her informative report. He commented on the large amount of estates work being carried out and also on the amount of new starters. He asked whether there is an unusually high number of new people. KP said that since taking up post, she has improved the induction process. New people now only start employment at three points in the year, January, May and September (unless their position is business critical). This enables the College to provide a thorough, collective induction for new staff. September recruitment was especially high because of the new Camberwell Rd centre. Demand in that area is high. Student numbers have also increased at Beaconsfield and Nightingale. Total staffing numbers across all sites currently sits at 288. There has been a drive to reduce the number of agency staff and the college has nearly reached its target of 80% permanent staff and 20% agency.

Governors **RECEIVED** the Principal's report.

## **b) Dashboard**

Governors **RECEIVED** the dashboard for the second half of last term, noting that an updated version for this term will be circulated once all data has been collected.

DH asked how the College was able to collect staff typicality data at this time. KP said that the process has been adapted so that everyone has a minimum of three observations/learner walks. This gives an overall picture. Weekly targets are set and it helps to increase staff skills and development. There are also Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) learner walks, which involve the therapy teams, behaviour support teams etc.

DH also asked what had caused the dip in the ILP target achievements. KP explained that this was due to only 33% of students attending in the first lockdown. There has already been an increase this term but students are still missing community targets. Curriculum delivery has been adapted to address this.

With regard to the missing Health and Safety data, KP said that new system does not yet report centrally but it is hoped this will be in place soon.

PL asked about the Safeguarding data in relation to Looked After Children (LAC). KC said that LAC data in College relates to students that are in Supported Living.

RA asked about the data for numbers on roll, noting that there was a significant decrease in students between Year 1 and Year 2. KP explained that this is because the Workstart group attend a 6 month programme.

Governors **RECEIVED** the dashboard

## **c) Self-Assessment Report (SAR)**

KP said that this was a draft version of the SAR that would be presented to the OHC Board for approval and she welcomed comments.

Governors were impressed with this document, which they said demonstrated that the College continues to provide outstanding learning for its students, despite the many challenges Covid has presented.

RA said that it is evident that all students are treated individually and the curriculum is tailored to their needs.

KP thanked governors for their comments. She said that once it had been approved by the OHC Board, it will be posted on the Ofsted portal. It will also form part of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which will she bring to a future governors' meeting. She added that the QIP is now a much more succinct document than previously presented which will give governors a high level overview.

Governors **RECEIVED** the SAR.

## 9. Portfolio Visits

### i) Ethos, Vision and Strategy-DH

DH said he had met with KP at the start of this half term. It was evident that it had been a tough time for staff and yet, the College is performing very well.

Governors asked how many students and staff have to self-isolate if there is a positive Covid case. KP said that each bubble is formed of 12-16 students and staff, who would all have to self-isolate.

### ii) Teaching and Learning-MH

MH said that she felt humbled by the excellent work being done at the College at this particularly challenging time. She said she had spoken to Mel Shepherd on the phone for her portfolio visit and discussed the Workstart programme. There is naturally some concern about how students will gain work experience in this current climate but she said she was confident that the job coaches will do their utmost to ensure this continues to happen.

### iii) HR and Organisational Development-RA

RA said that much of what had been discussed during his portfolio visit had been covered in the Principal's report but he added that, for this latest lockdown, the guidance for shielding for the extremely vulnerable had been received very late which had made planning difficult.

There have been 17 internal promotions, which is positive because those staff members already know the College and students really well.

HR policies have been reviewed and will be presented to the Board for approval at their next meeting.

Employment contracts have been updated to ensure they are compliant with GDPR etc.

DH asked how recruitment for therapists is progressing. KP said there had been an improved marketing campaign which has resulted in 80% of the vacancies being filled.

### iv) Safeguarding-NM

NM asked if the Team Teach CPD had taken place. KC said that this had been delivered as a face-to-session in the training week, as it was considered business critical, and had gone well.

NM endorsed other governors' comments, praising the staff and the students for their excellent work during this pandemic.

Governors **RECEIVED** the portfolio reports.

## 10. Finance and Funding

### i) Management Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

SC presented the Management Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020

She said that these were unaudited and there will be minor adjustments to the audited version.

There is a surplus of £1.3m which was more than anticipated due to some savings made during Covid. Plans are being drawn up to spend the surplus to benefit the students.

AA asked whether the College is drawing up any contingency plans in anticipation of a recession. SC said this was a good point that she would raise with the finance team.

Governors **RECEIVED** the management accounts to 31.7.20.

### ii) Management Accounts-September 2020

SC said that there are 248 students on roll, against a budget for 256 students. There may be further enrolments. A lot of work is carried out to ensure that the staffing is matched to the student numbers.

Work is continuing to ensure there is a balanced budget but SC assured governors that the current year is on track.

The college is waiting for a valuation of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) so there will be some adjustment which will impact on the reserves.

The ratios on the balance sheet are above target and the cash days are strong. Reserve days are at 109, the target is 90.

The college is looking at setting up new bank accounts to maximise interest rates.

Governors **RECEIVED** the management accounts for September 2020.

## **11. Policies and Procedures**

Governors noted the policies and procedures approved by the OHC&AT Board in the summer term.

## **12. Dates of Future Meetings**

The following dates were agreed and noted:

- Tuesday 16th March 2021 at 4pm
- Tuesday 15th June 2021 at 4pm
- Tuesday 9th November 2021 at 4pm

The meeting closed at 5.20 pm.

**CHAIR:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_