

**Orchard Hill College Committee meeting  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 4.00pm (Held virtually)**

- Present: David Hobday, (DH) Chair  
Michele Humphreys, (MH) Vice-Chair  
Ric Adams (RA)-Parent Governor  
Helen Dixon (HD)-Staff Governor  
Neil Mears (NM)
- In attendance: Tracey Goodsell (TG) Clerk  
David Thomas- (DT) Deputy Principal  
Craig-Van-Der Veld (CV) Head of College Hillingdon  
Mel Shepherd (MS) Head of College Southwark  
Rich Brown (RB) Head of College Kingston  
Anthea Rowley (AR) Head of College Hillingdon  
Kerry Macey (KM) Head of College Sutton

*Clerks note: Curriculum Leads from all the college centres joined the meeting as observers.*

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Kelly Phillips, Kirsty Cottrell, Charlotte Evans and Akansha Arya.

### **2. Welcome and Introductions**

HD was welcomed as the new staff governor.

The Curriculum Leads that had joined the meeting as observers were also welcomed to the meeting.

All present introduced themselves.

### **3. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations made.

### **4. Constitution and Appointments**

i) Governors noted that RA's term of office as a parent governor terminates on 25.3.22. TG undertook to speak to RA after the meeting with regard to his possible re-appointment.

TG suggested that it might also be worth considering appointing another parent governor from one of the other regional hubs, in line with discussions regarding the constitution of this committee.

ii) Governors noted that the appointment of Helen Dixon as staff governor would be approved by the OHC Board at their meeting on 25.3.22.

## **5. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **6. Matters arising**

Further to minute 3 and 4, TG agreed to re-send the email regarding Declaration of Interest and Skills Audit form returns.

Further to minute 10ii), it was noted that Charlotte Evans would give a presentation on the College systems at the next meeting.

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

DT highlighted the following areas in the Principal's report:

### **1. Introduction**

Despite another term of challenges posed by Covid, staff have remained flexible, positive and energetic. Recruitment is also proving difficult, and governors noted that this is a challenge across the Education sector. The college continues to focus on how it advertises and promotes the culture and opportunities for staff.

RA, HR portfolio holder referred to his recent portfolio visit, where he had reported the following points:

- The College's competitor in terms of recruiting HR staff is Harris Academy. However, 3 HR Administrators have been appointed, each of whom have been given a client group.
- An excellent Head of College for Wyvern (starting in September) has also been appointed. This is very positive news as Wyvern has been difficult to recruit to, partly due to a lack of local work force with skills to work with the specialist needs of our students.
- A lot of work has been done on OHC's recruitment offer to ensure it is attractive. The use of people's stories on our website is proving very powerful.
- The gender pay gap has been reviewed recently. The gap is bigger in the College than the Trust, but this data may have been skewed by the departure of two higher earning male members of staff from the College.

RA commented that he was always very impressed by the HR team's continual drive to improve.

DT added that the appointment of a new Head of College at Wyvern demonstrates that the reputation of the College in that area is starting to embed in the local community and people are buying into the College's ethos, mission and values.

DH also referred to his portfolio visit where he had discussed some of the developments with the College buildings.

## 2. Student Numbers 21/22

Governors noted that student numbers are healthy. There is a slight backlog with assessments, due to a reluctance on the behalf of carers/parents to have face-to-face meetings, but this is improving.

In response to a question from RA, DT confirmed that PBS capacity stands for Positive Behaviour Support (supporting students to manage their behaviours). These students need to be in centres where there is more break out space.

## 3. Teaching and Learning

Governors noted the whole college and regional summary of Teaching and Learning and were pleased to note that the quality overall is at least Good.

DT spoke about the PMLD specialists reflective practice group for lecturers and STAs working with this cohort of students. These sessions are run by DT and Sarah Gummet-Hart, Clinical Lead for Creative Therapies. DT said that there are one or two classes with this profile of need in each region, and it is hoped that this cross-college approach will support lecturers' practice.

With regard to student destinations, RA asked how the College judges whether students are accessing high-quality destinations. DT said that this is led by the student's passions and aspirations. Lecturers will track back through their EHCPS and have conversations with students about their aspirations. These conversations are student-led. DT said that he genuinely believed that students are achieving their goals. He said he meets with every lecturer to ensure this is happening and the Assessments and Placements team follow up on students once they have left to make sure their destination is sustainable. DH asked whether there was data to evidence sustainability. DH said he would be able to provide this for the next meeting.

**Action: DT to provide data to evidence the sustainability of student destinations.**

## 4. Staff Development

DT said that despite the challenges that have been faced this year, the Diploma for Education and Training (DET) continues to be delivered and is evidence of the emphasis that the organisation places on staff CPD.

MH referred to her portfolio visit where she had met with KP and Suzi Challenger (Head of Strategic CPD, Training & Policy Development at the new Robin Hood centre to discuss the DET. She explained that this qualification is accredited by Canterbury Christchurch University and the College works in partnership with CCU to deliver the SEND module.

She said that this Level 5 qualification is free to staff, which is unparalleled in other College. It is also good recruiting incentive. There is a lot of planning and preparation involved to make the course accessible to all staff, with each session being recorded and one day per fortnight is run as a face-to-face session.

The College expects staff that qualify to remain employed by OHC&AT for at least two years.

DH asked how many staff have qualified since 2016.

DT said that he knows that four members of staff at Lomond House have qualified. He said that some of the people that had joined as observers for this meeting are also undertaking the qualification and they continue to contribute well to the organisation.

#### 5. Safeguarding

DT said that students are able to access a more targeted curriculum with regard to safeguarding. The increase in intervention plans is evidence that staff can recognise that students need this more targeted approach.

NM referred to his portfolio visit where he had met with KC at Beaconsfield. He said the recent works have now been completed and it is impressive what has been achieved with the space available.

In response to governors' questions, DT said he believed that once the new Kingston site is ready, this will be the sole space in Kingston.

NM passed on his thanks to Chris Baker, the Head of Centre at Beaconsfield, who had been very welcoming during his visit.

NM had also referred to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining Regional Safeguarding Leads. DH asked how that work is being covered at the moment. DT said this is being covered by the Head of Centres at the present time. The job description is being reviewed and maybe combined with the role of the Transitions Officers to offer a more attractive package.

#### 6. Health and Safety

Noted.

#### 7. Premises

Noted

#### 8. Finance and Funding

Noted.

#### 9. College Events

Noted.

Governors also reviewed the dashboard and agreed that it triangulated with the other documents received at this meeting.

RA asked for a comparison year-on-year to be provided for the next meeting.

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

### **8. Policies**

Governors **NOTED** the policies that had been approved by the OHC Board in autumn term 2021.

### **9. Dates of Future Meetings**

Governors **AGREED** the dates of future meetings as follows:

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 4pm

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 4pm

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 4pm.

### **10. Any Other Business**

TG reminded the observers that whilst the minutes of this meeting were a public record, matters discussed in the meeting should be kept confidential.

DT thanked the governors for allowing the Heads of Curriculum to join the meeting.

The meeting closed at 17.10pm