



Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 5pm via Teams

Present: Patrick Alcantara (*Foundation Governor*)
Sarah Carroll (*Foundation Governor*)
Kevin Crooks (*Staff Governor*)
Janet Gater (*Principal*)
Mick Martin (*Foundation Governor*) – Chair
Kieran O’Sullivan (*Associate Member*)
Rob Peacock (*Foundation Governor*)

In attendance: Lauren Boswell (*Assistant Principal, Student Development & Support*)
Laura Forsyth (*Vice Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral*)
Peter Murphy (*Assistant Principal, Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing*)
Carmen Nunez (*Dean of HE*)
Marie Kendrick (*Deputy Dean of HE*)
Liz Walls (*Assistant Principal, Vocational & Super Curriculum*)
Ruth Potter (*Clerk*)

The Chair opened the meeting in prayer.

1. ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Declarations of interest

Attendees were invited to declare whether they had any direct or indirect personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any matter which formed part of the agenda for this meeting or was likely to be discussed at this meeting. No declarations were made in addition to those already recorded on the Register of Interests. The Clerk advised members of Patrick Alcantara’s updated interests. Kieran O’Sullivan reported that he was now employed by the City of Liverpool College.

1.2 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence had been submitted. The meeting was declared quorate.

1.3 Items to be included under urgent business

There were no items for submission under urgent business.

1.4 Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held 18 November 2025 (*previously circulated*)

The minutes were **approved** and would be signed in accordance with Article 12 (3) of the Articles of Government. The publication of the minutes was authorised in accordance with Article 13 of the Articles of Government.

1.5 Matters arising from the minutes (*previously circulated*)

Committee members noted the action log prepared by the clerk. Reference was made to the drill down NEET data provided in relation to action point 3 and discussion ensued on the College’s process for chasing up destinations data.

1.6 **Committee Risk Register** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the extract from the strategic risk register which had been included to provide oversight of the risks specific to Quality & Standards Committee.

A point of clarification was raised with regard to the scoring mechanism for risk impact and the Clerk took an action to clarify the position following the meeting.

Resolved:

- **That the Committee Risk Register be received and noted.**

ACTION – Provide confirmation of the risk register scoring mechanism

2. SAFEGUARDING

2.1 **Safeguarding Termly Report** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the report prepared by the Assistant Principal (Student Development and Support) and invited comments and questions.

Discussion ensued on the reduction in safeguarding incidents compared with the previous year's data. This was pleasing to note and was felt to be reflective of growing resilience amongst the student population. A point of clarification was raised for those incident categories which showed a greater number of students than incidents. It was confirmed that sometimes there were multiple students linked to one incident which would explain this anomaly.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Q – Note consultation on Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026. Would the College be submitting a response?

A – Yes. Consultation response had already been submitted by the College providing feedback on anticipated impact.

Q – Any major changes anticipated to the College's existing systems as a result of KCSIE changes?

A – Not so much on systems, but more in relation to the guidance surrounding gender questioning students and implications whilst in College and out on trips and visits. Also, guidance on sharing information on transition between educational settings. Consultation due to close on 22 April, following which the final KCSIE guidance would be published. The Assistant Principal indicated that the College policy would then be reviewed, updated and brought back to governors for approval.

Q – If a student had been referred to the counselling service for assessment, what would happen if they then failed to attend the appointment?

A – Student's Personal Achievement Tutor (PAT) would chase this up to ensure that the student no longer required the appointment and had an appropriate support network in place.

Q – Noted recent hoax emails sent to schools across Merseyside resulting in a number of lockdowns. Update requested on College's response and lockdown procedures.

A – College sent out email communication to all students, staff and parents as advised by Merseyside Police in relation to the recent hoax email. No lockdown

was required. The Assistant Principal reported that since the lockdown practice last summer, a number of amendments to the College's procedure had been made. Further specific actions were planned in response to Martyn's Law (the Terrorism [Protection of Premises] Act 2025). The challenges for a 16-19 educational setting, when compared with those of primary and secondary schools, were highlighted.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her comprehensive report and governors acknowledged the work of all staff involved in safeguarding and supporting students.

Resolved:

- **That the Safeguarding Termly Report be received and noted.**

3. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

3.1 HE Progress Report *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the report provided by the Dean of HE and thanked her and the Deputy Dean for attending the meeting to respond to arising questions.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Q – Were previously reported issues with coursework still a concern?

A – Coursework with practical components had improved following the implementation of the new scientific practical skills sessions.

Q – Progression data to HE remained a concern. What was being done to address this?

A – Change in method by which progression was recorded had been recommended to align the College's process to that of the University of Liverpool's. This had improved the percentage progression figure.

Discussion ensued on retention data and the positive impact of the University of Liverpool's attendance and engagement policy was reported. A review of the entry criteria was highlighted – specifically in relation to Maths GCSE grade – to ensure prospective students had the necessary skills to succeed on the programme.

A point of clarification was raised in relation to the semester one Geography results which were reported to be the same as the previous year. It was confirmed that this was an error and an action was taken to provide the updated data following the meeting.

The Chair noted the positive outcome of the HE institutional review which had resulted in the renewal of the College's institutional agreement with the University of Liverpool. The review panel had made a number of recommendations and an update was provided on the actions to address these.

The Chair thanked the Dean of HE for her comprehensive report.

Resolved:

- **That the HE Progress Report be received and noted.**

ACTION – Provide updated report with corrected semester 1 results data

Carmen Nunez and Marie Kendrick left the meeting at this point.

3.2 **Level 3 Progress Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the comprehensive report prepared by the Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral). Pleasing progress was noted with regard to CAP1 and CAP2 data (Year 12). CAP5 data (Year 13) showed an improvement on CAP4 and was reported to be in line with CAP5 progress reported at the same point last year. No significant concerns had been identified from the data, however the Vice Principal reported ongoing monitoring to address any performance that dipped below expectation.

Questions and comments on the Level 3 update were invited.

Discussion ensued on the performance differential by gender given that females had outperformed males across the latest CAP data. Experience indicated that female students often performed consistently throughout the course of the year, whereas male performance tended to peak in time for final exams. The Vice Principal reported on a recent round of staff CPD which had been targeted for departments with underachievement by student gender or disadvantage. All performance would continue to be closely monitored.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for her comprehensive report.

Resolved:

- **That the Level 3 Progress Report be received and noted.**

3.3 **Foundation Learning Progress Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Foundation Learning report. CAP2 data indicated that all students were making progress in line with expectation. A marginal improvement in attendance data was reported. The Assistant Principal (Student Development & Support) provided an update on the post-Ofsted inspection action plan. Further multiple-role work experience placements had been organised to provide opportunities for skills development designed to prepare students for employability and other positive destinations.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Q – What does CAP2 assessment look like for Foundation Learning students given the nature of the programmes?

A – CAP assessment was linked to formal BTEC qualifications, however this was only one part of the holistic programme offered to Foundation Learning students. Soft skills development was also tracked and work was underway to systemise the tracking of work experience and EHCP outcomes.

Q – Confident that assessments were being made with the right level of rigor across the whole Foundation Learning Programme?

A – Yes. Still developing systems and tracking processes during the course of this year and then aim to get external assurance via Natspec audit. Also, collaboration with another sixth-form college as critical friend has helped to shape development of the programme.

Governors were in agreement that an external review by Natspec would be an important source of assurance. The Committee acknowledged the hard work of all

Foundation Learning and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) staff to secure improvements and noted the increased focus on skills and work experience.

Resolved:

- **That the Foundation Learning Progress Report be received and noted.**

3.4 DfE Performance Data (previously circulated)

The Chair referred members to the Vice Principal's report containing the College's Level 3 performance data for A Level and Applied General Qualifications (AGQs) alongside local and national benchmarks. Key performance measures included:

- Progress score
- Average point score
- Average grade
- % of students achieving AAB
- Average grade and point score for best three A Levels
- Destinations
- Qualification achievement rate.

The College had placed in the top 10% of the country for A Level progress score and in the top 5% for AGQs. Of particular note was the average A Level grade which had improved from a B- to a B for the first time in a number of years. In addition, the strong performance of disadvantaged students in both A Level and AGQ cohorts was highlighted.

Committee members noted the very pleasing performance data and put on record their thanks to all College staff and students.

Resolved:

- **That the DfE performance data be received and noted.**

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1 Quality Improvement Plan 2025-26: progress update (previously circulated)

The Chair referred members to the Principal's progress report and the March 2026 progress update against all QIP actions. The Principal highlighted the following points:

- Action 1 – improvements for subjects under formal subject review reported in next agenda item (4.2)
- Action 4 – DfE announcement that morning on transition plans for Level 3 qualification reform confirmed that BTECs would remain in place until the new suite of V Levels had been phased in. This provided more certainty in terms of curriculum planning.
- Action 5 – Catholic Schools Inspection would take place in 2026-27 academic year. Positive progress reported on preparations for this key inspection.
- Action 9 – staff and governor training on the new Ofsted inspection framework would take place in March.

Governors noted pleasing progress reported against all QIP actions and the Chair thanked the Principal for her report.

Resolved:

- **That the QIP progress report be received and noted.**

4.2 **Interventions to raise achievement** *(previously circulated)*

The Vice Principal referred governors to her report and confirmed that the usual quality assurance processes and high-volume strategies had continued. QIP reviews were underway with subjects of strategic importance. Specific actions and progress updates were reported for A Level Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (REP), including CAP data.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Discussion ensued on the REP data and the differences in retention between the Year 13 groups. It was confirmed that there was no comparable difference between achievement data and a clear action plan was in place to secure improvements across all groups.

Resolved:

- **That the Interventions to Raise Achievement report be received and noted.**

4.3 **Lesson observations and lesson visits report** *(previously circulated)*

The Assistant Principal (Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing) outlined the College's approach to formal lesson observations and visits, with visits providing a more informal and developmental approach that informed CPD planning. The profile of formal lesson observations undertaken over the last three years was highlighted; common strengths and areas for development were identified.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Q – Plans for Summer Term include reference to peer visits, will these be undertaken by peers within subject areas or across subjects?

A – A mix of both. Peer visits will be arranged through the College CPD lead and will provide a good opportunity for staff to watch each other's lessons.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for his report and noted the positive judgements made on the vast majority of observations.

Resolved:

- **That the lesson observations and visits report be received and noted.**

5. **CURRICULUM AND SKILLS**

5.1 **Curriculum Annual Review** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred governors to the Vice Principal's report which confirmed no planned changes to A Level provision, continuation of the current Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) offer, continued marketing of the T Level offer, and overarching alignment with the Liverpool City Region Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) priorities. The Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral) referred to the DfE announcement earlier that day which confirmed that BTECs would continue to be funded until the new V Level qualifications were launched. The impact on the College's curriculum planning was highlighted with greater certainty for the next two years.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Discussion ensued on the current recruitment numbers for the T Level and the overall viability of the programme. It was noted that recruitment was still ongoing and therefore no decision would be taken until final numbers were known.

Q – Were any alternative T Level options under consideration?

A – Not at present. Need to wait for V Levels to launch and assess impact of these as well as potential changes to T Levels. Further consideration may then be required to address any gaps in the market in conjunction with wider skills priorities.

There was universal agreement that all recruitment must be conducted with integrity, with a sharp focus on whatever qualification pathway was in the best interests of the student.

Resolved:

- **That the Curriculum Annual Review be received and noted.**

5.2 **10:10 Programme Annual Review** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the 10:10 Programme annual review and noted in particular the improvement in attendance at 10:10 Ethics and Values sessions following the changes implemented last year.

Additional comments and questions were invited.

Q – What external assurance was planned for the general RE aspect of the programme before the Catholic Schools Inspection next year?

A – No formal external assurance. Internal quality assurance process would be followed and collaboration with the Archdiocese of Liverpool and other Catholic colleges to help benchmark practice and identify areas for improvement.

Q – General RE programme being used as cross-College pilot to implement oracy strategy. What impact would this pilot have?

A – Aim for College to become a Voice 21 oracy centre to help students develop verbal communication skills. General RE involvement in pilot offers good opportunity to implement key oracy strategies across the whole student population in a consistent way.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal (Student Development & Support) for her report and acknowledged the positive improvements achieved with regards to student engagement and attendance.

Resolved:

- **That the 10:10 Programme annual report be received and noted.**

6. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

6.1 **EDI Annual Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy and annual report. The Assistant Principal (Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing) highlighted the extensive EDI data for staff, students and governing body set out in appendices and reported a change in student demographics, with an increasingly diverse student profile. Comparative data was included from the 2021 Census and the DfE's further education workforce data collection.

Feedback from the EDI Link Governor's report was shared which reflected on student feedback on the safe and inclusive College environment that welcomed students from diverse backgrounds. It was noted that College societies and the cultural appreciation day supported this atmosphere across campus.

The EDI action plan for 2025-26 was highlighted and outcomes reported against the previous year's plan.

Comments and questions were invited.

Q – Any specific concerns arising from analysis of the EDI data sets?

A – Staff diversity profile was significantly lower than that of the student profile. Confident that appropriate HR strategies were in place to ensure fair and equitable recruitment processes, supported by software that facilitated blind shortlisting.

Q – Was comparison with St Helens local authority census data appropriate given the College's enrolment of students from across the wider Merseyside area and beyond?

A – Difficult to know where to draw the line and given the College's location in St Helens, had used this as the reference point. Will keep this under review.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for his report and invited members to recommend the report to the Governing Body for approval.

Resolved:

- **That the EDI Strategy and Annual Report be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.**

ACTION – FGB agenda item

7. POLICIES

7.1 Use of Reasonable Force and Physical Intervention Policy *(previously circulated)*

The Assistant Principal (Student Development & Support) confirmed that the policy had been presented for early review due to the DfE's publication of statutory guidance on the use of restrictive and physical interventions. Significant modifications had been made to the policy and the title had been updated to include reference to physical intervention. A further update to the title was proposed to refer to restrictive force and the policy review frequency also required update to align to the triennial cycle previously approved by the Governing Body.

Governors' comments and questions were invited.

Q – How many incidents had occurred in College that required the policy to be invoked?

A – The Assistant Principal confirmed that there had been no incidents in the last year.

A point of clarification was raised with regard to the complaints process applicable for this policy. Clause 9 confirmed that the main College complaints procedure would apply.

Resolved:

- **That the Policy be recommended to the Governing Body for approval.**

**ACTION – (a) Amend policy title and update review frequency
(b) FGB agenda item for approval**

7.2 Strategies for Success Policy (*previously circulated*)

The Assistant Principal (Student Development & Support) reported that the policy had been brought for early review due to an addition to the student code of conduct. The amendment was proposed to ensure the code was explicit about student behaviour expectations.

Discussion ensued on whether the policy should include specific reference to reconciliation given the College's mission and ethos. Governors were in agreement that an appropriate reference should be made within the policy and agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Principal and Clerk to make the amendment.

Resolved:

- **That the Strategies for Success Policy be approved subject to amendment to include reference to reconciliation**
- **That authority be delegated to the Assistant Principal and Clerk to determine appropriate wording for the required amendment**

ACTION – Amend policy to include reconciliation reference

8. COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT

8.1 SFCA paper: Guide to achieving an effective curriculum and quality committee (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the recently published SFCA paper on operating an effective curriculum and quality committee. Whilst the Ofsted inspection and external governance review undertaken in 2024 had not raised any specific issues with the conduct of the College's Quality and Standards Committee, he invited members to take the opportunity to review current practice against the recommendations set out in the paper. Key areas of discussion were as follows:

- Meetings

The paper recommended a schedule of meetings and workshops that represented a significant addition to the current Committee's cycle. Discussion ensued on the decision made two years ago to remove the September Committee meeting and instead present summer exam results directly to the whole governing body. It was agreed that an informal workshop on exam results would present a useful opportunity for Committee members to review the data before the full board meeting. It was clarified that this should be an informal workshop with one sole agenda item and it was agreed that the Clerk, Vice Principal and Committee Chair would set a date for this to take place in September 2026.

- Student involvement

The student governor was no longer required to sit on the Committee and discussion ensued on how best to ensure student voice was fed directly into the Committee. It was agreed that student input at the outset of the meeting on a particular area of relevance, for example the annual Student Voice report, would be useful.

- EDI mid-year progress reports
In-year progress updates against the EDI action plan was highlighted as an area where Committee oversight could be strengthened. It was agreed that the Committee Chair and Assistant Principal (Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing) would liaise further to explore the feasibility of a mid-year progress report.
- Oversight of self-assessment review (SAR) process
Governor involvement as critical friends on subject SAR panels was established practice and all members agreed that this was fundamental to governors' knowledge of the quality assurance process. Following this, governors were involved on the whole college SAR validation panel prior to the full board's approval of the SAR and QIP. Members were in agreement that the current level of involvement and oversight of the SAR process was adequate.
- Length of papers and reference to learner implications
Discussion ensued on the opportunities for refinement of the executive reports to the Committee and the development of the standard cover sheet. It was agreed that the Committee Chair and Clerk would work to develop an example cover sheet and guiding principles document for executive reports to governors.

Resolved:

- That the SFCA paper be received and noted
- That action be taken as agreed to further improve Committee effectiveness

ACTION – (a) Schedule informal workshop on exam results

(b) Consider opportunities for student input at outset of meetings in line with business cycle

(c) Consider mid-year EDI action plan progress report for inclusion in business cycle

(d) Develop example cover sheet and guiding principles document for executive reports to governors.

9. OTHER MATTERS

9.1 Urgent business

None

9.2 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 19 May 2026 at 5pm

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution at the meeting. There being no further business to address, the Chair closed the meeting at 7pm.

Signed by the Chair 

On this day _____ 19 May 2026 _____