

TRAFFORD & STOCKPORT COLLEGE GROUP

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Further Education Curriculum and Quality Committee
held on Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 1.00pm
in the Boardroom at the Altrincham Campus Trafford College**

Present:

Sarah Drake	Chair
Charlotte Barratt	
Olivia Bussey	Vice Chair
Graham Luccock	
*Emily McIntosh	
Michelle McLaughlin	Staff Governor
Marcia Reynolds	
James Scott	Chief Executive Officer
Miracle Mbokela	Deputy Student Governor
Jiasa Nehal	Deputy Student Governor
James Cash	Co-opted Member

*attended via MS Teams

In Attendance:

Rebecca Clare	Corporation Secretary
Carmen Gonzalez-Eslava	Group Principal
Yvonne Riley	Assistant Corporation Secretary
Adam Sinnott	Assistant Principal Quality and Student Experience
Helen Wood	Vice Principal 16-19 Education and Skills
Katie Goodwin	Assistant Principal Student Support, Safeguarding and Inclusion
Tracey Wood	Chief Commercial Officer

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Prior to commencement of the meeting, the Chair welcomed the Vice Chair and confirmed that the Vice Chair would be chairing the meeting as part of the succession planning and mentoring programme.

It was noted that the Vice Chair had also recently completed the AoC Chairs Leadership Programme.

The Vice Chair thanked the Chair for her support and mentorship.

FEC&Q/01/25 Apologies for Absence and Introductions

The Corporation Secretary (CS) reported that apologies for absence had been received from Student Governors, Blerta Shira and Aisha Shabbir

James Cash, co-opted member of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee was welcomed to his first meeting and introductions were made.

A welcome was also extended to Katie Goodwin, the newly appointed Assistant Principal Student Support, Safeguarding and Inclusion.

Emily McIntosh was also welcomed as this was her first attendance at the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee.

Minute No**FEC&Q/02/25 Declaration of Direct or Indirect Interest in any of the following Items**

There were no declarations of either direct or indirect interest recorded.

FEC&Q/03/25 Minutes of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2024

The minutes of the meeting were approved and accepted as a correct account of the meeting.

FEC&Q/04/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Vice Chair referred members to the previously circulated summary and progress update concerning the actions arising from the minutes and earlier meetings of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee.

It was confirmed that all the actions had been closed.

There were no further issues raised by members arising from the minutes.

FEC&Q/05/25 Proposed Ofsted Framework

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated presentation in relation to the proposed Ofsted Framework including the Inspection Toolkit for further education and skills.

The presentation covered the following:

- Building a Better Ofsted
- What does Ofsted want to achieve
- Ofsted's vision for inspections of education providers
- Proposed changes for ALL settings
- Proposed report cards
- Proposed toolkits
- What the proposals mean for Further Education and skills
- Consultation and timeline

The GP provided an overview of the new Ofsted Inspection framework, which was influenced by the unfortunate passing of a headteacher and findings from the coroner. The new framework aims to reset the relationship with the education sector, refine and rebuild trust, and address the lack of trust within the sector. The consultation, 'The Big Listen' involved parents, communities, headteachers, students, and others to gather input on what the new inspection framework should look like. It was noted that the proposed changes include new report cards, a five-point rating scale, ranging from 'causing concern' to 'exemplary', tailored inspections, and a focus on inclusion.

The GP advised that the new Ofsted framework, proposes 20 different judgments for colleges, divided into four main categories: leadership, inclusion, safeguarding, and contribution to meeting skills needs. It was noted that each category is further broken down into specific aspects such as curriculum,

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teaching and learning, achievement, and participation. It was highlighted that the judgments range from 'causing concern' to 'exemplary'.

The GP highlighted the sector's mixed feelings about the changes, emphasising the need for Ofsted to train inspectors effectively and the ambitious nature of the new framework. It was noted that the sector had also expressed concerns about the feasibility of assessing 20 different judgments within a four-day inspection period.

The GP confirmed that if the proposals are approved, the new framework will be effective from November onwards, with consultations closing in April 2025.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

- In relation to four-day inspections, a member asked if there was any indication of how many inspectors there might be during the inspection period and the GP advised that it was not envisaged that Ofsted would increase the number of inspectors.
- In response to a question, it was confirmed the Group were in the process of preparing a response to the consultation and that a number of staff members may also be responding individually. The GP advised of AP involvement in consultations through the Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network with feedback provided directly to Ofsted via the senior HMI.

Action: Group Principal

The GP confirmed that the Governor Osted Ready Group meeting would be taking place prior to closure of the consultation, and it was agreed that governors would be provided with the opportunity to see the Group's response to the consultation.

- A member enquired about the nature of inspections, specifically if inspections would still involve deep dives or if there was any guidance on where inspectors might go. The GP advised that whilst the term 'deep dives' might not be used, the approach remains similar. It was noted that it was likely that inspectors would still discuss with the provider to decide which areas to focus on, influenced by the size of the provision and outcomes and that the process would still involve targeted curriculum areas rather than random selection.
- In response to the question, it was confirmed that skills measures would be requested in advance of the inspection.
- A member expressed concerns about the difference between secure and strong descriptions, noting the subjectivity of terms like 'significant' and 'effective.' The GP discussed the issue of consistency in Ofsted inspections, highlighting that colleges with similar datasets could receive different outcomes depending on the inspection team. This inconsistency is a concern, as it could lead to varying judgments despite similar performance metrics. The GP emphasised the need for a more consistent approach to ensure fair evaluations across different colleges.

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- A member enquired about colleges participating in the new pilot framework, and it was confirmed that pilots have not started but that over 200 pilots have been planned, including schools and independent training providers. The GP confirmed that specific colleges for pilot participation have not been identified.
- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) commented that the changes being implemented are more of an evolution rather than a revolution and noted that whilst the terminology and some aspects may have changed, the fundamental principles and judgments remain largely the same.
- The CEO noted that Sir Martyn Oliver (His Majesty's Chief Inspector) highlighted the term 'exemplary,' and commented that to achieve an exemplary rating, providers would need to demonstrate 'world-class' standards.
- The CEO commented that alongside safeguarding, the new framework significantly pushes the focus on inclusion. It was noted that this change aligns with the government's agenda to support inclusive education and is seen as a critical aspect of the new inspection framework.
- The CEO advised that given the timeframe from the last inspection, it was anticipated that TSCG would be one of the first colleges inspected under the new framework.
- A member raised a question about the responsibilities of governors in terms of leadership and supporting leaders' wellbeing, and how to monitor leaders' wellbeing effectively. The GP acknowledged that the Group needed to give further thought to how governors will monitor leaders' well-being. It was noted that Ofsted had delivered mental health training to inspectors to recognise physical changes in leaders that might indicate stress, but that this had been reported to have been very limited. The GP suggested that governors might need to demonstrate strategies for ensuring the well-being of leaders, similar to how leaders are held accountable for staff well-being.
- A member shared his opinion on the primary sector, highlighting concerns about the new Ofsted framework, the lack of change and commented that the proposed framework still poses high stakes accountability. It was further highlighted that the proposed changes by Ofsted do not seem to address the fundamental issues related to well-being and the pressure of accountability. The member emphasised the importance of the sector's response to the consultation to ensure that the voices of educators are heard, and that the framework is improved to better support schools and colleges.

Action: Governor Ofsted Ready Group

- **It was agreed that leaders' wellbeing will be discussed further at the first Governor Ofsted Ready Group meeting.**

Action: Corporation Secretary

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- It was further agreed that the CS would send out the link to the consultation document to governors.

There were no further issues or questions raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was resolved that the update in relation to the proposed Ofsted framework be received and noted.

FEC&Q/06/25**Quality Improvement Plan and Performance Indicators 2024/2025 Update Report including Apprenticeship Accountability Framework**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated reports and update on the progress of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2024-2025 as well as a report in relation to the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework (AAF).

Quality Improvement Plan and Key Performance Indicators 2024-2025

A progress update against the 8 objectives or Areas for Improvement (Afls) was presented within which the GP highlighted the following key points.

Attendance:

- Overall college attendance for 16-18-year-olds is slightly higher than the target of 85%, currently at 86.4%, which is a 2.5% improvement compared to this point of the previous year.
- Attendance for English and maths currently stands at 70%, which is 5% below the target but a 5% improvement compared to this point of the previous year.
- Adult attendance is currently at 86%, 3% higher compared to last year at this point.
- Apprenticeship attendance is 88%, 3% higher at this point higher compared to last year at this point.

The GP advised that numerous interventions were taking place to improve attendance and narrow the gap between students' main programme and English and maths attendance.

Quality of Teaching and Training:

The GP reported that, whilst progress is being made, there are still inconsistencies in the quality of education and the experience that learners receive across different areas.

It was confirmed that support and mentoring are in place for teachers requiring assistance, and initiatives like the Teacher Dashboard and the 'One Practice Change' process are being implemented to drive up standards.

Student Outcomes:

It was confirmed that significant work had been done to assess gaps in performance across different campuses and subject areas. It was noted that, whilst progress is being made, inconsistencies remain in the quality of education and student outcomes.

Apprenticeship Provision:

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- Efforts to improve the quality of apprenticeship provision continue, with regular employer involvement in planning and assessment.
- Retention is currently at 77%, but this position is likely to decrease over the coming months.
- Staffing challenges in key areas such as Electrical and Plumbing have impacted learning.

Professional Behaviours and Attitudes:

The GP advised that, although low-level disruption and behaviour continue to be a challenge, the number of serious incidents has decreased compared to the previous year.

It was confirmed that have been 145 suspensions up to February half term 2024/2025, which is a reduction of 39% compared to the same point of the previous academic year

Employability Skills:

- 85% of 16-18-year-old students have completed the Navigate skills assessment, with tailored enrichment opportunities being developed based on priority skills.
- The number of students participating in activities that develop them socially and culturally continues to grow

Support for Learners:

- Gaps in performance for different groups of students have been identified, with local action plans in place to narrow or close those gaps.
- Retention and attendance are in line or higher than that of 16-18-year-olds for all cohorts except those with SEMH.

Employer and Stakeholder Involvement:

- Progress is being made in involving employers and stakeholders in the co-design and co-delivery of programmes.
- The curriculum offer aligns with local, regional, and national skills needs

The GP highlighted that the high number of Amber RAG ratings are due to the early stage of the year and noted that there are no major concerns on AfIs at present.

In relation to the KPIs, the GP highlighted the positive progress in student retention, in relation to inclusion categories.

It was confirmed that attendance remains a concern, particularly in English and maths where there is a significant gap between overall attendance and attendance in English and maths.

The GP advised that the completion of work experience hours appears red in the report, but it was confirmed that many students have completed substantial hours towards the full 35 hours required.

Apprenticeship Accountability Framework

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The GP referred members to the previously circulated presentation and overview of the Group's position in relation to the national set of Apprenticeship Accountability Framework (AAF) metrics.

The GP advised that the indicators collectively provide a comprehensive view of a provider's performance and are regularly monitored by the DfE.

It was confirmed that the Group is currently rated 'green' for all indicators and that this is a much-improved position compared to previous years and a result of the relentless approach to improving our apprenticeship provision.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

Action: Governor Ofsted Ready Group

- **A member commented that maths and English would need to be a focus for the Ofsted Ready Group to ensure that governors remain fully sighted on the current position and measures taken to support students and improve the position.**

The GP commented on a recent inspection at another college that had reported an attendance rate of 84% for GCSE maths, which was considered low and noted that different colleges measure attendance in various ways, which can affect comparisons.

- A member asked a question in relation to the AAF and the apprenticeship EPA overspill, specifically regarding the number of apprenticeships completed after the planned end date. The GP advised that whilst the percentage of apprenticeships completed after the planned end date might seem high, it is still within acceptable limits. It was noted that the commentary in the report indicates that only if the percentage exceeds 15% would it be considered a risk, and currently, the percentage is below that threshold at 8.8%. The GP advised that the overspill is attributed to various factors, including employer availability, EPA organisation availability, and in some cases, apprentices needing to retake their assessments.
- A question was raised in relation to the apprentice employer feedback, highlighting that the response rate for the employer survey is very low and it was confirmed that this survey is managed by the DfE and sent directly to apprentices and employers, with no control over who completes it. It was confirmed that the Group would be conducting its own surveys to gather more actionable feedback.

The CEO highlighted that the apprenticeship employer feedback relates to the 2024/25 period but that there is a rating for this available for previous years.

There were no further issues or questions raised by members and following due consideration and deliberation it was unanimously resolved that the Quality Improvement Plan and Performance Indicators Report 2024-2025 including Apprenticeship Accountability Framework be received and noted.

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The Assistant Principal Quality and Student Experience (APQSE) referred members to the previously circulated reports and gave an overview of the quality of education and analysis of how continuous improvement was being driven.

Key aspects included:

- TSCG is the best performing FE college in Greater Manchester for A-Levels (published performance data for 2023/24), but with mixed results for other types of qualifications, and further work to do, particularly in Applied Generals. TSCG ranks 2nd in GM for students progressing to education or employment, with 74% of students achieving a positive destination. Level 3 Apprenticeships achievement is equal to the national average, and level 2 is 4% above national average.
- Predictions from progress grade 2 indicate that 24.5% of 16-18 students are performing above target grades, 54% at target, and 21.5% below target. Predicted achievement is currently at 88%, which would be a 4% increase on 23/24.
- Value-added predictions from progress grade 2 show expected improvements in A-Levels and Applied Generals but highlight the need for further improvement in Tech Certs and Tech Levels. It was noted that the APQSE would be delivering a CPD session on Progress and value-added.
- TLA strategy for 2024-30 aims to deliver high-quality education through seven key aims, including challenging lessons, developing independent learners, and embedding robust assessment methods. This strategy is supported by the established Teaching Learning Framework, that is now widely used across college when observing lessons.
- The third CDAR of the year focused on curriculum implementation (primarily TLA), identifying strengths and areas for improvement in teaching quality, assessment, and learner engagement. 244 learning walks have contributed to the findings of the report, as well as extensive learner voice and IQA activity.
- Curriculum areas undertook self-assessment and quality improvement validation panels and a term one progress review of in-year impact, confirming that we're making progress against meeting the agreed Afls; however, progress is too slow in some areas and that will be the focus in terms 2 and 3.
- CPD plan for 2024/25 prioritises areas such as AI and digital skills, long-term memory retention, feedback, industry upskilling, SEND, and dealing with challenging behaviour.
- The report outlines various action plans to address identified issues, including targeted support for failing students, promoting value-added scores, and enhancing teaching and learning practices.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

- In response to a question, it was confirmed that if Ofsted came in early in 2025/2026 that inspectors would be examining the data set on progress and value added as published and reported above.
- In response to a question as to whether the Group was generally good at predicting achievement, the APQSE reported on analysis and highlighted that

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it found that predictions were quite accurate in most areas, with only a few exceptions. It was noted that the Quality Team had spoken to the curriculum areas where the predictions were not as accurate.

- In relation to the CDAR, a member raised concerns in relation to lateness in lessons. The APQSE acknowledged that there is inconsistency in how lateness is dealt with across different subjects which the Group were seeking to address. The deputy student governors highlighted that some teachers have effective routines for addressing lateness, while others do not acknowledge it, leading to disruptions. It was confirmed that there is a formal intervention process for students that are repeatedly late.
- In response to a question on the planned CPD session on value added, it was confirmed that the session aims to increase teacher awareness and understanding of value added and progress. The APQSE advised that data from different courses will be examined to illustrate the impact of student grades on value added scores to increase teacher awareness. It was noted that the session will also focus on practical strategies to support students to achieve better grades, emphasising the importance of effective teaching and learning practices.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Quality of Education Update Report be received and noted.

FEC&Q/08/25**Careers Update including Gatsby Benchmarks**

The Group Principal (GP) referred members to the previously circulated report and update on CEIAG at the Group, including performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks and the latest Matrix accreditation report.

It was confirmed that the report also included a summary of the Government's Vision on CEIAG and the updated Gatsby Benchmarks.

National Context

It was reported that the Government's approach to careers guidance for young people is based on delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance.

The GP noted that performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks has improved over time, however, challenges remain, and evidence suggests several key areas for promoting continuous improvement nationally and regionally:

- Technical and vocational pathways remain less well understood.
- There are challenges in securing employer engagement, e.g., employer encounters and work experience.
- Careers leaders report challenges around time, resources, and organisational buy-ins to deliver high-quality careers programmes.
- Schools and colleges find it challenging to meet the enhanced needs of some young people.
- Young people report a lack of clear user journey to find careers support

Gatsby Benchmarks – Self Assessment

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The GP outlined the Group's current position and areas of development for each of the eight Gatsby Benchmarks.

It was confirmed that the majority of areas for development were RAG rated Green/Amber or Green with good progress being made.

The GP advised that, in line with the updated Gatsby Benchmarks, particularly around benchmark 8 (Personal Guidance), further planning and work should be developed.

It was confirmed that a strategic approach and introduction to a 'careers passport' which focuses on the length of the college course and key points of decision-making was currently being developed.

The GP reported that, to date during this academic year 1468 (26.5%) 1:1 appointments have been delivered across all sites.

Matrix Assessment: December 2024

The GP reported that the Group had been assessed for the Matrix standard.

It was noted that the assessment was rigorous in its application and saw 43 staff interviewed, 23 students, and 12 external stakeholder partners liaised with.

It was also noted that the Matrix assessors scrutinised a broad range of documentation such as the Strategic Plan 2024-2030, TSCG Self-Assessment Report, the Quality Improvement Plan, a selection of departmental QIPs including HE, selection of Job Descriptions, Student Surveys, Equality and Diversity Policy, CEIAG Policy and Careers Programme 2024-2025.

Strengths identified in the report:

- The importance of IAG within the context of learning programmes.
- TSCG has an excellent understanding of participation levels and of the outcomes (including attendance, retention, achievement rates and destinations) achieved by learners from diverse backgrounds.
- The Group's values (resilient, ambitious, respectful, collaborative and inclusive) are embedded across the workforce.
- Employers find the Group straight-forward to deal with, and say their contacts are highly responsive.
- Leaders and managers have an appetite to identify and exploit relevant technologies and digital resources.
- Whilst there are few compulsory requirements for students to engage in activities/support, TSCG is highly proactive in promoting its support offers, and successful in engaging students.
- The needs of individual students are identified initially and throughout their journey using either prescriptive assessment methods or ad hoc exploratory discussions and always personalising the approach.

National Careers Week

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It was reported that the National Careers Week had been coordinated between the Student Enrichment and the Careers Teams and that daily activities had been made available to meet both the Government's five missions and respond to the career's week theme.

Next Steps and Timeline

- Continue to drive actions that will improve the Group's performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks
- Fully embed the new team members within the wider Student Experience Team
- Continue to work strategically across GM and maximise the impact of local services and collaboration opportunities.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

A member raised a question in relation to CEIAG and the creation of strategic communities of practice at a local level. It was noted that communities involve career leaders, local authorities, employers, and educational institutions working together to enhance career development. The DP commented on chairing a local hub meeting and the allocation of an industry person to support providers. It was confirmed that this initiative aims to identify key factors that will improve career development locally and regionally, rather than focusing solely on meeting benchmarks.

A member questioned the contact and assurance on the self-assessment of the Gatsby Benchmarks, particularly Benchmark 8 (personal guidance). The GP explained that the current model involves one-to-one appointments for each student, which is not efficient. It was noted that the Group plans to move to a more tailored approach, offering group sessions and more bespoke one-to-one sessions as needed.

A member enquired about the capacity to move from 26% to 100% in providing one-to-one career appointments. The staff governor explained that the current model is not sustainable and advised that the Group is working on a new appointment system to better manage resources and ensure all students receive appropriate guidance.

A Committee member asked the GP to pass on their gratitude for all the hard work that had been undertaken in relation to the Matrix standard

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Careers Update including Gatsby Benchmarks be received and noted.

FEC&Q/09/25**Student Digital Entitlement**

The APQSE referred members to the previously circulated report and an update on the implementation of the new Student Digital Entitlement (SDE) as part of the Group's Digital Strategy.

The following key updates were outlined:

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Student Digital Entitlement:

- The SDE was launched in 2023/24 to equip students with essential digital skills for education, life, and work. It integrates Office 365 skills into course delivery to enhance learning experiences.
- The SDE comprises three core strands: everyday interaction with Microsoft Class Teams, building essential digital skills and key competencies, and developing subject-specific digital skills. An optional fourth strand allows students to become Digital Pioneers.
- Emphasis is placed on upskilling teachers to effectively deliver the SDE. A curriculum staff digital skills survey identified gaps in digital skills, leading to initiatives like 'Two Minute Tech Tuesday' videos to support staff.

Student Feedback:

- Surveys indicate high student engagement with digital tools, with positive feedback on using Microsoft Class Teams and other technologies.

Digital Skills Development:

- Mandatory digital skills sessions focus on Microsoft Office 365 tools. Digital Skills Week promotes these skills, and a new tutorial on Artificial Intelligence has been introduced.

Next Steps and Timeline

- The SDE is to be expanded to include a fifth strand on understanding and harnessing Artificial Intelligence, covering AI literacy, ethical considerations, and collaboration with quality assurance teams.
- Renewed focus on subject-specific digital skills, as this has been the least successful aspect of the SDE to date
- Renewed focus on upskilling our teachers, in order to support them in effectively delivering the Student Digital Entitlement

A member questioned the confidence of students in using digital platforms. The APQSE confirmed 78% of students at Trafford College and 69% of students at Stockport College feel confident in using digital platforms. A member also questioned whether the students felt confident using AI. The APQSE confirmed that the AI strand of the digital entitlement is continuing to be developed.

A member raised a question about whether the Group could aim to become a Microsoft Showcase College. The APQSE advised that the Group has been sharing best practices with other institutions and has itself been recognised for its effective use of Microsoft Teams.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Student Digital Entitlement report be received and noted.

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The Vice Chair invited the Student Governors present to deliver the Student Governor Report to the Committee, which included a summary of the student conference and the survey results in relation to education and skills

The following points were raised based on student feedback and experiences since the last meeting:

- Students report feeling safe across all campuses and have good connections with teaching staff.
- Awareness of bursary services has improved, but there could be more communication about bursaries and free laptops for students.
- Students are confident about their next steps and target grades.
- There are issues with vaping and crowded smoking areas.
- There is a need for more sports activities and better facilities across campuses.

The CEO acknowledged that there are drainage problems on the astro turf at Marple, resulting in cancelled games. Regarding concerns about crowded smoking areas and vaping in toilets, a member suggested increasing signage around the campus. A discussion ensued on how the Group might manage these issues through increased awareness and monitoring. It was also noted that students may be using the toilets for vaping and socialising, which affects class participation.

A member asked about the presence of nicotine pouches on campuses. The deputy student governor confirmed that he had seen them.

The CEO noted that the Group had created an additional smoking shelter within the perimeter of Marple campus for safety reasons and that this was in response to students expressing concerns about feeling unsafe when using the external smoking shelter.

The Vice Chair and members thanked the Student Governors for their informative report and presentation which shared student experience and opinion.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Student Governor Report and accompanying presentation be received and noted.

FEC&Q/11/25**Student Experience Report including Learner Voice**

The APQSE referred members to the previously circulated report which provided members with an update on the Group's student experience and student engagement activities that add value and develop students personally, culturally, and emotionally for their next steps.

The APQSE confirmed that the report provided additional information in relation to the work carried out by the Personal and Professional Development Team across the Group in 2024/2025.

The following aspects of the report were highlighted:

- Employability Skills Assessment: 85% of students have completed the Navigate employability skills assessment, identifying key skills to improve,

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such as confidence, enterprising, digital skills, and leadership. There is a focus on increasing this to 100% and retaking the assessment to measure progress.

- Future Skills and Enrichment Plans: The Personal and Professional Development team collaborates with curriculum departments to plan bespoke enrichment activities based on the Navigate Skills Assessment outcomes and to ensure that enrichment activities are meeting skills needs.
- Student Enrichment: Various inclusive initiatives are offered to support student aspirations and opportunities within the local community. Increased membership in student participation groups has been noted, for example a significant increase in membership of the Equalities Council and Debate Club.
- Political Literacy: The Group introduced auto voter registration and activities such as Parliament Week and Mood Box Monday to engage students in political literacy and civic engagement.
- Schools Liaison: Several new initiatives are in place to meet enrolment targets for 25/26. Two very successful 'Construction for Girls' events have taken place for year 10 students, which have received very positive feedback.
- Work Experience and Industry Placements: Work experience is a key component of study programmes, with various activities and placements offered throughout the academic year. Currently 52% of students have undertaken work experience and/or work-related learning as part of their programme. The introduction of Industry Placement Officers for T-Level placements has been successful with all students placed. Industry placements are on track but next year may pose challenges with increased requirements for placements. In some areas better recording is needed.
- Learner Voice: The mid-year survey showed high satisfaction rates of 90%, which is 1% improvement on the previous year, from a very high 76.3% response rate. Key findings include high scores for feeling safe, understanding college values, and developing future employment skills. Areas for further development include developing digital skills, developing maths skills and 1-1 meetings with course tutor. Academic Cheadle was the highest scoring department, with 95% satisfaction.

Next Steps and Timeline:

- Complete further analysis of the outcomes of the Navigate Skills Assessment to support curriculum with developing identified employability skills.
- Continue to review the success and impact of the PPD activities offered to our students and the implementation of the Future Skills and Enrichment Plans.
- Launch the new Student Experience Strategy. Strategy to be completed by the Spring term and clearly set out what our vision is for an outstanding Student Experience across the college.
- Work closely with curriculum areas to ensure all students benefit from quality work experience and/or work-related learning, and that we meet the college KPI's for WEX and PPD. To target those areas that are currently tracking below expectation for support.

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- Curriculum managers to follow up outcomes of mid-year survey with student focus groups.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

- A member commented positively on the enrichment activities, highlighting that the targeted enrichment activities supporting the curriculum are an excellent idea. It was noted that the approach was appreciated and could help reduce the teachers' workload. It was suggested that this model could be further explored, particularly in relation to careers.
- A member questioned the student governors about their experience of tutorials. The student governors expressed that some tutorials feel repetitive and not engaging. A student governor suggested having more innovative and educational themes, covering new material and emphasising the extra support available to students. The student governor also expressed that teachers need to make students aware of the importance of tutorials as students often view tutorials as optional and may not engage with them. It was confirmed that tutorials are important for the development of soft skills. It was explained that tutorials include a central bank of resources that staff can use and adapt based on the level of learners. Following the tutorials students take a test on their understanding. The APQSE mentioned that tutorials could be integrated into the core programme, with course tutors spending the first fifteen minutes of each week on key messages. The approach was previously used post-Covid and could be revisited.

Action: Assistant Principal Quality and Student Engagement

- In relation to participation in extracurricular activities, a member asked if the pie chart on page 5 could include a breakdown of the number of students at each college.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Student Experience Update Report be received and noted.

FEC&Q/12/25**Student Support Report**

The Assistant Principal Student Support, Safeguarding and Inclusion (APSSSI) referred members to the previously circulated Student Support Report, encompassing matters relating to both a pastoral and a learning support (inclusion) perspective. It was confirmed that the report also included an update on student suspensions.

The following aspects of the report were highlighted:

Learner Support

- Mentors have seen 1837 learners (approximately 17% of the overall TSCG cohort) and carried out 4726 one-to-one sessions to date. Further detail can be found in the Student Support Report, including a breakdown of the ethnicity of those accessing learner support.
- 7% of mentored students are adults whilst the remaining 93% are on 16-19 study programmes.

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- The Online Hub has been accessed 5286 times since the start of the academic year (227% increase since the last report) and provides learners with an opportunity to access support that best suits their individual needs.
- 49.8% of mentored students are female whilst the remaining 50.2% are male, compared to 65.6% of mentored students were female and 34.4% male previously. Increase in males is due to visiting the departmental areas with a male bias to promote the service, equality and diversity.
- There are 577 (an 85% increase following the last report) learners with a declared mental health need in 2024-25 at this point in the academic year which represents 5.5% of the total TSCG cohort with an average attendance of 77.4%, 7.1% less than the overall college average but 2.2% higher than last academic year.
- The Pastoral team are Mental Health First Aid Trained and nominated staff are trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills.

Safeguarding:

- There has been a 27% increase in the total number of safeguarding referrals compared to the same point in 23/24
- The increase in students accessing the service is in line with the national picture with 93% of teachers reporting an increase in total number of safeguarding referrals and government data reporting a 59% increase in complex safeguarding referrals (NSPCC 2023).
- The online training Hub for the BELONG project has been accessed 3267 times (404% increase since the last update) and 114 staff (104% increase since the last update) have completed the full training prior to the allocated CPD slots.
- Staff have cited a 31% increase in knowledge and confidence in applying the concepts of Relational Practice. Over 150 staff attended the Belong session delivered at the teaching and learning conference.
- The college continues to work in collaboration with GM Violence Reduction Unit and has identified some key priorities in addressing behavioural concerns across the Group.
- Our Leaders in Safeguarding audit took place in May, which had a very positive outcome overall. Further meetings have taken place to ensure the key recommendations are being addressed.
- In the student end-of-year survey, 98% of students said that they felt safe during their time at college. The 2% who said that they did not feel safe were spoken to and the reasons were identified

Learning Support and Inclusion

- There has been a significant increase in High Needs learners over a three-year period. The increase in contact hours for Learning Facilitator support has been addressed through rigorous recruitment in partnership with the College's Employability and Skills team.
- The number of High Needs students requiring learning support has grown significantly again in 2024/25 by 22.5%. The largest percentage of learners with High Needs/EHCPs are studying in Progression curriculum (136), followed by Creative Media (39). There are currently 530 EHCP students, and 321 of those are High Needs.
- The most significant declarations on EHCPs are for cognition and learning, Autistic Spectrum Condition, SEMH, sensory or physical and Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Minute No

- Retention for High Needs and EHCP learners has increased, evidencing the individualised support and curriculum that many students receive:
- The College is currently receiving consultations and applications for 2025/26. In addition to these, the Transition team provide a range of support for potential students and the professionals working with them.
- The ESFA have increased our High Needs Funding numbers from 330 to 344 for the year 2025-26. This will increase the funding into the college

Student Suspensions:

- There have been 146 suspensions up to February half term 2024/25, which is a reduction of 35% compared to the same point of the previous academic year.
- Physical, verbal or sexual assault is the primary reason given for suspensions accounting for 32%. Substances, harassment/bullying and weapons are the next highest referral categories totalling 12% respectively.
- A-levels, Business, Progression, Creative Media and Health and Social Care account for 52% of total suspensions. Targeted professional supervision sessions were provided for these areas giving access to an Educational Psychologist to facilitate discussion around behaviour management. In addition, we trialled a teaching and learning conference in Construction with all staff including behavioural management as a key CPD theme
- Cheadle campus has the highest number of suspensions (78), closely followed by Altrincham (69), Stockport (37), Marple (24) and Stretford (11).
- There have been 16 exclusions up to February half term 2024/25, which is a reduction of 43% compared to the same point of the previous academic year.
- Incidents are up against the previous year by 241%. This is demonstrative of the success of the new reporting system and the firm stance we are taking around behaviours and attitudes.
- Whilst incidents have increased, suspensions have reduced by 35% demonstrating effective de-escalation and application of relational practice.

Alternative Provision/Curriculum Development

- Trafford LA stated in the SEND Employment Forum that there has been a significant increase in NEETs and the new provision offered by TSCG has gone a long way in addressing this for the borough.
- 110 learners attended the College Ready Programme in July 2024, of which 90 learners (82%) have progressed to full time course in 2024/25. As of February 2025, 82 learners are still on programme and 2 have already completed. This is a retention/completion rate of 93%.
- The 'Bespoke' programme at Altrincham has had 6 learners attending on-site, and there are 10 learners attending the new blended course, developed for students who have health concerns that present a barrier to attending and will assist their transition into the College. Retention is 79% for these learners.
- The 'Step into Learning' at Stockport has been successfully implemented, consisting of a 10-week alternative curriculum programme, with three cohorts of 10 learners scheduled, one per term. Learning is specifically designed to re-engage learners who may have become NEET. 13 learners have undertaken this course so far, to date, with 5 of these learners have progressed into other curriculum areas as a result of successfully completing the course. Another 6 learners started the course in January 2025.

Minute No

- Barriers to positive attendance present challenges for learners on this programme, where many have previously had negative educational experiences and become disaffected. There are currently 20 learners enrolled on the programme for 24/25.
- There are two well-established Supported Internships based at Stepping Hill Hospital and Trafford General Hospital, with further supported internship negotiations happening with Trafford Council. Amazon, HMRC and Tec.
- In Choices, a Progression shop has been opened, designed to promote life skills and prepare learners for the workplace.

Next Steps and Timeline:

- To establish a strategic working group with the Violence Reduction Unit.
- To establish a staff development plan for LFs to drive capacity and capability in areas of specialism and support, such as ADHD and autism, with the potential to deliver our own provision in these areas in the future as a SEND Centre of Excellence.
- To establish a 'SEND Training' offer for the local community and education settings to support the increasing demand and complexity of SEND needs.

Questions and comments were invited from members.

- A member questioned the reduction in high-level disciplinary actions attributed to the Belong Project. The APSSI confirmed that there is a correlation, and specific data will be collected at the end of the academic year for this.
- A member questioned the main reason for suspensions. The APSSI confirmed that the highest number of suspensions is due to various reasons categorised as 'other' followed by verbal and physical assault, serious harassment, bullying and weapon possession. The APSSI confirmed that weapon possession is very low (2 cases) but swift action has been taken to address this, including collaboration with Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit and local police forces, inclusion of knife and weapon awareness in tutorials and training for staff on vigilance and proactive measures.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that the Student Support report be received and noted.

FEC&Q/13/25**Strategies**

The Group Principal commended the following strategies to the Board of the Corporation for approval:

- Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy
- Student Experience Strategy
- SEND and Inclusion Strategy

It was noted that an overview of each of the strategies had been provided at the at the recent Governor Strategic Development Day.

Action: Group Principal

Minute No

A member suggested incorporating curriculum design and sequencing into the strategy in the Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy to better support learners.

Action: Group Principal

A member noted the impact of the Belong Project, which was not included in the three outlined strategies. The attendees discussed where the Belong Project should be incorporated and suggested it could be a theme across all three strategies.

Action: Group Principal

It was also noted that the SEND and Inclusion Strategy would be renamed the SEND and Vulnerable Students Strategy to better reflect its focus. The change aims to clarify the strategy's scope and ensure it aligns with the broader inclusion efforts within the Group.

Action: FE Curriculum and Quality Committee

The need for timely feedback on the strategy documents was emphasised to incorporate changes before the next Board meeting on 26 March 2025. The CS confirmed that feedback would need to be provided no later than 14 March 2025 to ensure all amendments are reviewed effectively.

Action: Corporation Secretary/Group Principal

A member requested a policy update at the next meeting to address upcoming changes in apprenticeship regulations and other FE policy areas. It was agreed that this would be included in the summer governor training session as it was important for all governors to receive the information.

There were no further questions or issues raised by members and following due consideration it was resolved that, taking into account any further comments from members before 14 March, the following Strategies be recommended to the Board of the Corporation for approval:

- a) Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy
- b) Student Experience Strategy
- c) SEND and Inclusion Strategy

FEC&Q/14/25 Any Other Business

There were no matters raised under any other business.

FEC&Q/15/25 Date of the Next Meeting

The Corporation Secretary advised that the next meeting of the FE Curriculum and Quality Committee would be held on Tuesday 25 June 2025 at 1.00pm.

The Chief Commercial officer left the meeting at 2.26pm.

The deputy student governors left the meeting at 3.00pm.

The meeting ended at 3.09pm.

Minute No