

Minutes of the Curriculum & Quality Committee meeting
16 June 2025
UG45, Tresham College
16:00

Members Present: Richard Dimpleby (Chair)
Cathy Barr (online)
John Butcher
Yiannis Kouris (CEO)
Alasdair Simmons (Chair of the Corporation)
(Observing)

In attendance:

Sarah Baxter (Executive Director of Strategy & External Affairs)
Kathryn Brindley-Edwards (Principal – Sixth Forms)
Karen Campbell (Principal – Bedford)
Vicky Chainey (Executive Director of Student Experience & inclusion)
Hayley Doyne-Ditmas (Head of Bedford Sixth Form “BSF”)
Sara Gonzalez (Senior Governance Coordinator) (Minutes)
Clare Hood (Executive Director of Education)
Ben Morris (Head of Corby Sixth Form “CSF”)
Rachel Nicol (Group Director of Governance)
Robin Webber-Jones (Executive Director of Curriculum)

CQ/31/25 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies: LJ Rawlings (leave of absence), Noor Ul-Ain Nazir, Kasar Singh, Sheila Selwood.

Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest relevant to matters on the agenda.

CQ/32/25 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

The Chair requested moving topics around on the agenda to bring up topics for approval while all external members were present.

The Chair of the Committee went through the two actions pending on the action log: both actions are in progress and, on their way to be finished.

The Committee was presented with the Internal Audit report review on work experience and industry placements. The CEO gave a summary of the discussion



in the Audit Committee meeting and the conclusion that whilst providing assurance, the scope did not allow for insight into some known problem areas.

CQ/33/25 Quality of Education

The Executive Director Education took the paper as read.

There was an update on the current position in relation to Quality of Education at The Bedford College Group ("TBCG"), providing detail linked to predicted achievement and teaching and learning, as well as detailing provision types across the organisation. Then, the floor was open for questions:

The appendix with the BTEC courses table that had letters according to grades requires more information as it is not clear what each letter means.

The Committee wanted to have more information on the reasons for the Pearson results and under performance against expectations. To this, the Executive explained that it is both a national problem as well as an internal curriculum set up. TBCG is going to be reviewing the internal curriculum for next year.

The Group had questions regarding the CBC retention rate versus the achievement rate for apprenticeships and it was confirmed that no apprentices have left, hence 100% retention but 0% achievement since no apprenticeships have been completed yet.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance

CQ/34/25 Sixth Forms Strategy (creative session)

The Principal Sixth Forms and the Heads of Bedford Sixth Form and Corby Sixth Form attended the meeting to support a wider strategic conversation about sixth forms and the direction of travel to support understanding and future discussions.

CQ/35/25 Subcontracting report

The Executive Director Curriculum took the paper as read and opened the floor for questions.

The overall strategy is to reduce subcontracting but noting an increase in some activity in the short term.

This policy needs to be reviewed and signed by the Board. The Committee discussed the growth expected for next year.



The Committee acknowledged that whilst they normally have oversight of the quality of subcontracted provision and recommend policy and contractors it is for the Board to approve.

The Committee confirmed recommendation of the proposed partner organisations and policy for Board approval.

CQ/36/25 Curriculum Strategy

The Executive Director Curriculum presented slides to the Committee and opened the floor for questions.

The Committee asked about the alignment between this strategy and the one set for the Sixth forms. To this, the Executive provided assurance the Sixth Form's strategy is aligned with this one but with detail on implementation differing.

When asked, the Executive explained that the purpose of this strategy is to give a framework of what we are expecting to offer aligned with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and Accountability framework. The Committee noticed that the presentation was missing key words and planning around 'key knowledge'. The Executive confirmed that it is included and that the presentation will be updated to make it clearer.

The presentation showed a list of key areas of focus. To this, the Committee asked to make sure the ones that aren't listed should also feel relevant.

The Committee recommended the Curriculum Strategy to the Board for approval.

ACTION: RWJ needs to add specifics for Shuttleworth College.

CQ/37/25 Behaviours and Attitudes

The Committee was pleased to note the Matrix re-accreditation and positive feedback on the careers, advice and guidance function.

There were no serious issues to report, it was a normal and expected inspection. There are some further developments identified to ensure the function is fit for purpose in the context of the larger Group.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance



CQ/38/25 Committee work-update from the local C&Q meetings in May, Terms of Reference

The Chair and Group Director of Governance gave an overview of how the local groups have worked for the last two years, the discussion at the Governance Committee and the intention to continue the groups for a further year.

ACTION: To work on the Terms of Reference “ToR” with relevant Executive members before seeking approval of the Board.

C/39/25 Care inspection update

The Executive Director Education took the paper as read and opened the floor for questions:

The Committee asked if it is likely to have an inspection before the end of the academic year, to which the Executive believed it is not likely as no students are staying at the accommodation.

Regarding the other risks outlined at the previous meeting, the Committee wanted to know progress. Yes, risks have been mitigated and responsibilities articulated.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance

CQ/40/25 Transition provision (RESET programme)

The Principal Bedford College gave an update on what the RESET program will look like (it has been updated) following the report on transition provision at the previous meeting.

They have been looking at what can be offered to those students when returning to a typical school environment may not be appropriate to be able to adapt to their needs.

The Committee discussed how relevant and important this project is and the likely partnership working with local authorities.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance

CQ/41/25 Destinations

The Executive Director Strategy and External affairs took the report as read.

She summarised the key data and explained the percentages and the reasons for them.

The Executive noted that TBCG need to look at the students that are leaving the college without meeting their targets.

The Committee asked if it would be seen as a negative if students decide to pursue a career in a different area from what they studied. The Executive pointed that there are 2 questions on this: could they find a job AND do they use the skills learned in their job. If they could have found a job but choose to work elsewhere, that shouldn't be seen as a negative.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance

CQ/42/25 Higher Skills Partnership review

The Executive Director Curriculum took the report as read and flagged that TBCG is resetting the partnerships with the Universities in the region and beyond.

No questions or concerns were raised.

It was noted and the Committee was assured by the work that is being done.

Stakeholder feedback

CQ/43/25 Stakeholder Feedback (Employer Survey)

The Executive Director Strategy and External affairs took the report as read.

The Strategy is moving to increase the proportion of work done with larger employer organisations, currently with a lot of focus on SMEs. TBCG is also looking to improve the offer as it is not very good for all the areas (with a particular focus on apprenticeship employers).

Employers need to understand how important their feedback is for our Curriculum and to prepare students better for employment.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance.

C/44/25 Stakeholder Feedback (parent survey)

The Executive Director Strategy and External affairs took the report as read.

Similar to the employer survey results the position is improving but it is not where we want to be. The feedback is about when they need to contact the college, they



don't know how to reach the right person. The person with overall accountability in this area will start on Monday the 23rd June. Communication with parents tend to be difficult as the parents that might be key to talk to are the ones that are less likely to attend the meetings, open days or answer calls.

The Committee approved that the report provided assurance.

CQ/39/25 Minutes of the meeting 23rd April 2025

The minutes of the meeting on 23rd April 2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Meeting finished at 19:21