

Queen Mary's College Local Governing Body

Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 5.30pm

Conference Room, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke

Present:

Mr David O'Donnell (Chair)
Ms Maya Barton (student)
Mrs Maria Benedit (parent)
Mrs Mandy Buchanan
Mrs Liz Cooper
Mrs Jackie Day
Mr Mark Henderson (Principal)
Mr Shahpor Golshani (staff)
Mr Mark Kingswood
Mr Neil Maxfield (parent)
Ms Irate Odewale (student)
Mrs Agnes Wisniewska (staff)

10/11 quorate
(excluding students)

In attendance:

Ms Kate Need, Deputy Principal QMC
Mrs Lucy Poynter, Director of Student Wellbeing and SEND – *till 6.30pm*
Dr Toni Baldwin, Academy Secretary

30. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

David O'Donnell welcomed Lucy Poynter, Director of Student Wellbeing and SEND to and Shahpor Golshani a new Local Governor to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Kirsten Johnston

31. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

32.1 **CHANGES TO LGB MEMBERSHIP**

The LGB noted the updated LGB membership (paper LGB 21/25). The Chair highlighted the following:

- Shahpor Golshani had recently been elected as Staff Governor (replacing Marcus Rutland). Shahpor was the first support staff Governor for many years and as Head of IT and Digital Solutions would bring a college wide view to the LGB complementing the experience of teaching staff Governors.
- Sarah Pritchard had stepped down from the LGB as at 16th December 2025. The LGB put on record their thanks to Sarah for her six years as Local Governor including as Safeguarding Governor and more recently, as Vice Chair of the LGB.

32.2 The LGB elected Jackie Day as Vice Chair to replace Sarah Pritchard (proposed Neil Maxfield, seconded Liz Cooper).

33. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the QMC-LGB meeting held on 25th November 2025 (paper LGB 22/25) were approved by the LGB as a correct record.

34.1 **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Minute 24.4: First Aid courses

Kate Need reminded the LGB that Kirsten Johnston, who worked with St John Ambulance, had suggested that the College use their first aid training courses for

students. The LGB noted that following this introduction, St John Ambulance would be training staff leading student trips in first aid, on the next INSET day.

- 34.2 Minute 24.5: Following on from feedback regarding SAR meetings, Kate Need invited Local Governors to attend some of the Mid-Year Review meetings in March.

Local Governors were reminded to complete written feedback forms, if at all possible, after any visits to QMC.

35.1 **UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Mark Henderson gave a short verbal update:

- Governors recalled that a student had sadly died before Christmas and Mark Henderson reported that QMC staff had provided additional support for the student's friends and class including an additional staff member for the College ski trip in the Christmas break.
- A staff survey taken place at the start of term and the results would be shared in due course.

36.1 **SEND REPORT**

David O'Donnell introduced this item by reminding the LGB of the importance of supporting students with special educational needs or disabilities, as well as the need for the LGB to understand changes to SEND support nationally and how SEND support would be assessed under the new Ofsted framework.

Lucy Poynter (Director of Learning for Student Wellbeing and SEND) gave a detailed presentation to the LGB on provision for SEND students across the College.

The LGB noted that as at September 2025 QMC had:

- 98 students with EHCPs
 - 39 in Foundation Learning (2 withdrawn)
 - 57 in Mainstream (1 withdrawn)
- 300 students without EHCPs being supported

The LGB noted that QMC had significantly more students with SEND than other comparable colleges in the area and that one of the Governments' changes would be for all students to be supported and therefore more teaching of SEND students (with or without EHCPs) in mainstream.

- 36.2 Lucy Poynter explained the roles of the various staff involved in supporting SEND students as well as talking through the wide range of resources and activities in place at QMC. The LGB were pleased to hear that the majority of SEND resources and activities were open to all students who needed them even if they did not have High Needs funding.

Resources and activities included:

- Keyworkers, 1-1 meetings, and morning and lunchtime supervision for Foundation Learning students
- The Shrubbery quiet workspace – for any student who needed it (by invitation only)
- SSAs in class support
- Transition support for students with EHCPs joining the College followed by enhanced attendance monitoring and annual reviews of their support.
- Various staff specialisms including on Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC), SSAs (Student Support Assistants) were all encouraged to train in different specialisms,
- Social skills classes,
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and ELKAN (communication and language support) support.
- SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) – only for High Needs funded students

The LGB heard that the SEND team had positive relationships with schools, outside agencies and Hampshire County Council in order to ease the transition from school, review EHCPs and access various additional support for students.

- 36.3 The LGB discussed how the changes to national SEND provision and the changes to the Ofsted framework might impact QMC. Lucy Poynter reported that QMC was well placed for these changes as they already provided a lot of SEND support in mainstream teaching and often had whole staff training sessions on different aspects of SEND support. Mark Henderson explained that the new Ofsted framework included a strong focus on inclusion and Ofsted inspectors were likely to look at SEND and EHCP students in both Foundation Learning and in mainstream education.
- 36.4 Lucy Poynter reported on the current structure of the Foundation Learning Courses. The expectation was that students were in Foundation Learning at QMC for up to three years progressing each year. The LGB noted that all students needed to progress and not repeat years and this was made clear to parents when the FL students joined.
- Package – entry level
 - Progression – level 1
 - Pro plus – a second year to enable progression students to achieve a BTEC level 1 vocational diploma
 - Pathways – working towards independence, regular work experience, support for career progression apprenticeships or employment.
- Foundation Learning students had a range of progression routes, including specialist settings, employment or volunteering, other FE providers and mainstream courses at QMC.
- 36.5 Lucy Poynter set out some of the next developments for SEND within the College.
- Departments were being asked to complete a SEND audit tool to collate all the good work across the college as well as getting staff to, for example, look at how their classrooms were set out.
 - SSAs were continuing to improve their skills and knowledge. Recent courses included understanding PDA and ADHD. The LGB welcomed this upskilling with one governor reporting that better understanding of students' different needs was likely to lead to less anxiety and better attendance and retention.
 - The team had set up a SEND clinic, a drop-in service for both staff looking for advice on supporting students and students looking for support.
 - The enrolment process for September 2026 was being reviewed to include a step to collect data and supporting paperwork for support and exam access arrangements.
 - The College currently had 127 EHCP consultations in progress for September 2026 and Lucy Poynter was going through the process of considering if QMC could meet the needs of these students. The LGB noted that as a post 16 institution, QMC could not be compelled by HCC to take specific EHCP students.
 - The February INSET day would be used to carry out an inclusive learning audit for all teachers and further training would take place in response to the audit outcomes.
 - The monitoring and referral procedures for non-FL students were being reviewed to speed up the process.
- 36.6 The LGB discussed the new Exams Access Arrangements process in more detail, recalling that this issue had been raised at previous LGB meetings this year. Lucy Poynter reported that there were currently 439 students with exam access arrangements at QMC. Arrangements included, for example, separate rooms, extra time, rest breaks, word processors or access to an appropriate bilingual dictionary. The LGB noted that under the new arrangements, students were reassessed for exam access arrangements when they arrive at QMC with teachers required to identify and provide the evidence for assessments. Lucy Poynter reported that the team responsible had changed, a new

process had been set up, the exams team had had training on the process and training was being rolled out across teaching staff. One of the staff governors reported that the exams access changes this year had been very difficult for staff, particularly those staff teaching vocational courses with exams in November and January who had very little time to understand the process. Lucy Poynter reported that the national requirements had changed unexpectedly in September 2025 and it had taken QMC a couple of months to put processes in place. Kate Need reported that the new requirements were more suitable for school sixth forms than colleges, however, the SFCA and Wessex Group of Colleges had worked together and JCQ (the awarding body) had now provided models for teachers and were likely to make amendments to the process in the future. One of the Governors asked about pressure on staff and staff wellbeing and Lucy Poynter reported that it had been a difficult time for staff, however, now that the new process was in place staff were more confident in the requirements and further training was available.

36.7 Lucy Poynter ended her presentation with three case studies of Foundation Learning students.

- A student who started in Foundation Learning, completed a Level 2 Media Studies Course (no longer available) and then moved to mainstream and is doing well in the second year of a CTEC Extended Diploma in Sport and Physical Activity.
- A student who started in Foundation Learning where they completed a Level 1 in Number and Measure along with a grade 4 English GCSE. Now in T3 (transition to level 3) they are studying for a BTEC Certificate in Personal Growth and Wellbeing and CTEC in Art and Design alongside Maths GCSE.
- A student who has completed the Package class (Entry Level) is now in the Pathways course and planning to progress to a Level 2 course in Childcare at BCOT.

36.8 The Local Governors questioned Lucy Poynter on SEND arrangements at QMC.

Can we show how SEND students are achieving their goals, how is this measured? Where students are failing their targets what steps are put in place?

For Foundation Learning and other EHCP students the annual review process would pick up any gaps that had not been picked up through the year. All Foundation Learning students have personalised targets that are monitored through the year and the SEN team checks in with the key workers and teachers for mainstream students with EHCPs. The aim is to anticipate and resolve any issues prior to the annual review.

How are classroom observations by the Directors of Learning monitored and documented and actions taken where necessary?

New staff have three lesson observations and if any concerns are raised there is an option to extend probation periods or not pass probation. Some more established teachers are monitored if any concerns are raised. The outcomes of general learning walks are recorded in TLG minutes – at the moment most learning walks are covering the current Teaching and Learning improvement themes.

Can SEND students be compared with the rest of the college? What data is there and how is it monitored?

Kate Need reported that achievement data is recorded for all student in their ILR (Individual Learner Record). This data is monitored and the college has data to back up comparisons. Generalising, students with EHCPs and the other SEND students in mainstream achieve really good added value at QMC, however the achievement of these groups is brought down by lower retention rates. Lucy Poynter reminded the LGB that students with mental health issues were included in the SEND category.

36.9 The LGB noted the revised and updated SEND Policy (paper LGB 23/25). Lucy Poynter highlighted the proposed changes:

- An additional section setting out what will happen if the College can no longer meet a student's needs despite reasonable adjustments.

- The addition of a single point of contact for all correspondence if communication with parents/carers becomes excessive, unreasonable or disruptive.
- The clarification that the SENDCo is a DSL and a member of the College Safeguarding Team.

The LGB approved the Policy as written for recommendation to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Action: SEND Policy to Board of Trustees

The LGB discussed policies noting that the NHEA Complaints Policy had had a significant rewrite a few years ago and had been tested but was due a review. The LGB noted that the Trust/College received relatively few complaints. One of the Governors suggested that the College consider writing a Teaching and Learning Policy.

Action: LGB to review Complaints Policy and consider Writing a Teaching and Learning Policy **KND**

Lucy Poynter left the meeting

37.1 GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT 2025/26 – standing item

The LGB noted feedback from a SEND visit on 5th December 2025 along with a report on Careers support for SEND students (paper LGB 24/25). Jackie Day reported that she had discussed Foundation Learning and EHCP student numbers during her visit (numbers reported earlier) and highlighted that there were more students with EHCPs in mainstream education this year. Retention for Foundation Learning students was good. The LGB had had good update from Lucy Poynter this meeting and other recent FL activities had included:

- New kit for the Foundation Learning football team
- Additional speech and language therapy (in small groups)
- Successful Christmas market (the funds raised will be used for a summer trip)

37.2 The LGB noted the report from Sue Holly (Careers Advisor EBP South) on the Careers support approach taken with Foundation Learning and other SEND Learners. Sue is able to access information about students through Vista before their appointment and she uses a range of resources (interactive activities, videos, props etc.) to tailor careers guidance to individual students' strengths and interests.

38.1 REPORT FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Irate Odewale and Maya Barton reported on Students' Union activity:

- The Christmas events and Concert had been busy and the SU collection of small presents for young people in mental health wards over the Christmas period (Sasha's Project) had gone well.
- The SU were working on activities for the new term including the annual culture day.

38.2 With bigger projects, the SU were still hoping that the downstairs part of the library could be improved (from large open tables to individual study spaces). Mark Henderson updated the LGB on what was being done to improve student study spaces. Although the library was still on the list for potential refurbishment, the College was currently focusing on reopening the upstairs mezzanine in the Café to provide another study/eating area. The College had put a bid into the QM Foundation (Basingstoke education charity) to fund the mezzanine refurbishment.

39.1 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Kate Need started her presentation by reporting on the results of the Start of College questionnaire. Kate reminded the LGB that this questionnaire was circulated on the Vista App to all first-year students at the end of their first term at QMC. This year there had been a 45% response rate. Students had been asked the same questions for several

years now and the LGB were very pleased to hear that each question had scored above 4 (out of 5). Kate Need highlighted the improved responses to the questions about support - 'I know how to access personal support?' and 'I know how to access study support?'. The LGB noted that there had been a concerted effort over the last couple of years to remind students who to approach and where to go in the college to get support; the LGB were pleased to hear that this approach had been successful. Kate Need reminded the LGB that the 11-11.40 slot on the timetable was able to be used for subject workshops as well as for tutorials and enrichments.

- 39.2 Turning to the November GCSE resit results, Kate Need reported that 57% of the students had passed their English GCSE resit and 39% of the students had passed their Maths GCSEs. The LGB noted that the students would have another opportunity to pass these exams in the summer.
- 39.3 External Quality Reviews (EQRs)
The LGB noted feedback from two recent EQRs; Personal Development and Assessment and Feedback (LGB 25/25 and LGB 26/25). Kate Need started by explaining that, unlike the usual subject based EPQs, this years' EPQs had focused on cross college improvement themes. The LGB noted the timetables for each of the reviews which were similar to Ofsted inspections with learning walks, student focus groups, visits to T3 and Foundation Learning and meetings with members of staff.
- 39.4 The report on assessment and feedback was very positive highlighting that the strategy had been implemented consistently, students understand the purpose of feedback and what they needed to act on and there was evidence of the cross-college processes (clear routines, positive learning habits, effective low stakes assessment, retrieval practice and questioning, and exam technique). Areas for improvement included ensuring consistency in departmental planning and in embedding processes.
- 39.5 The report on personal development was similarly positive, highlighting the strategic approach, the design of the programme, buy-in from Tutors, student attendance and engagement and the 1-1 support given to students. Areas for improvement included adapting the programme to groups of students (T3, vocational students), the student portal and promotion and branding of the programme, as well as the scheduling of 1-1s and the use of coaching. The LGB noted that attendance at tutorials dropped slightly after UCAS applications in year 2 and discussed how students could be kept engaged. Kate Need reported that 2/3 of QMC students applied to University, but that once the UCAS deadline had passed the College moved focus to the remaining 1/3 who were currently applying for jobs and apprenticeships. Second year students were currently having tutorials on personal finance and diet and nutrition as part of independent living.
- 39.6 Kate Need reported how the recommendations from the two EQRs had been picked up in January's INSET day activities and how they would be taken forward during the rest of the year including a Teach Meet event in June (assessment and feedback) and a Careers Audit and instigation of a Careers Link role to provide the Careers Team with a contact in each department (Personal Development).
- 39.7 Kate Need ended her presentation with a quote from an Early Career Teacher at QMC who had been interviewed as part of a HISP Teaching School Hub visit. The teacher had identified the benefit of working with experienced teachers at QMC to observe what best practice looked like in the classroom.
- 40.1 **GOVERNORS MONITORING INFORMATION – *standing item***
The LGB noted the Governors Management Report with executive summary for the second half of the Autumn Term (paper LGB 27/25). Kate Need briefly summarised the report highlighting excellent attendance, high retention and the slightly lower level of

UCAS applications this year (final deadline not yet passed). The LGB noted that retention on some Year 2 courses (sept 2024 starts) was lower than would be liked and was being investigated.

- 40.2 The LGB noted that there had been more applications for September 2026 at this point in the recruitment cycle than had been received in recent years. Kate Need suggested that some of this increase could be due to the requirement for secondary schools to ensure that pupils were informed of a range of options for their next step. One of the Governors asked if there was any possibility of putting on a college bus from Alton in response to more applications from Amery Hill and Eggars. Mark Henderson reported that discussions were underway regarding the 2026 bus contract, however, there was a cost to the College for each of the bus routes. The LGB noted that stagecoach busses between Alton and Basingstoke were both slow and infrequent and this was a barrier to recruitment from this area.

- 41.1 **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN QMC-LGB AND NHEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
The LGB noted a summary of Trust meetings and activities since their last meeting (paper LGB 28/25) including appraisals for the Senior Post Holders and the approval of the Annual Report and Consolidated Statements for 2025. There were no issues of concern raised.

- 41.2 The LGB noted the NHEA Annual Report and Consolidated Statements 2025 (paper LGB 29/25). David O'Donnell reported that the Trust remained in a strong financial position and Mark Henderson elaborated on this, highlighting that the Trust had received a clean audit report and continued to budget within its income with strong reserves.

- 42.1 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
David O'Donnell reminded the Local Governors that they were invited to the annual Strategy Day on Thursday 12th February (note date change from that previously published).

43. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS**
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| <u>Local Governing Body meetings</u> | <u>Governors' Visit Mornings</u> |
| Tuesday 17 th March 2026 at 5.30pm | Wednesday 11 th Feb 2026 am |
| Tuesday 28 th April 2026 at 5.30pm | Tuesday 12 th May 2026 am |
| Tuesday 9 th June 2026 5.30pm | |

The Chair thanked those present and the meeting ended at 7.20pm

For approval at the meeting on 17th March 2026

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	Timescale	Responsibility
Minute 36.9: SEND Policy to Board Complaints Policy to next meeting Teaching and Learning Policy for consideration	Following meeting	TBN KND KND

Toni Baldwin
Academy Secretary, Queen Mary's College