

Queen Mary's College Local Governing Body

Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 30th September 2025 at 5.30pm
Conference Room, Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke

Present:	Mr David O'Donnell (Chair)	
	Mrs Sarah Pritchard (Vice-Chair)	
	Ms Maya Barton – to 7.15pm	
	Mrs Maria Benedit	
	Mrs Mandy Buchanan	
	Mrs Jackie Day	
	Mr Mark Henderson (Principal)	
	Mr Mark Kingswood	
	Mr Neil Maxfield	
	Ms Irate Odewale – to 7.15pm	9/12 quorate
	Ms Agnes Wisniewska – via TEAMS	(excluding students)
In attendance:	Mrs Sally-Anne Spooner, Director of HR and DSL - to 6.30pm	
	Ms Lucy Poynter, Director FL, Wellbeing and SEND - to 6.30pm	
	Ms Kate Need, Deputy Principal QMC	
	Dr Toni Baldwin, Academy Secretary	

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

David O'Donnell welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2025/26 academic year. The LGB welcomed Mandy Buchanan a recently appointed Trustee and Local Governor who was attending her first meeting. The LGB noted that, before retiring, Mandy had been Director of HR for both AWE and BMW and her child had previously attended QMC.

Apologies for absence were received from Marcus Rutland and Kirsten Johnston. David O'Donnell reported that the Search and Governance Committee had agreed a terms leave of absence for Liz Cooper and that Marcus Rutland had given notice that he would be stepping down as a Staff Governor at half term.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3.1 **MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODY**

The LGB noted the LGB membership as at 1st September 2025 (paper LGB 1/25).

The LGB elected Sarah Pritchard as Vice-Chair for 2025/26 (proposed Jackie Day, Seconded Neil Maxfield).

The LGB confirmed the following roles and agreed to review these before their next meeting.

- Safeguarding Governor – Sarah Pritchard
- SEND Governor – Jackie Day
- Careers Governor – Kirsten Johnston
- EDI Governor – Liz Cooper

Action: review of LGB roles

**DOL/
TBN**

- 3.2 The LGB noted that they now had access to training courses on GovernorHub and that these may start to be used in place of some Smartlog courses.

4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the QMC-LGB meeting held on 17th June 2025 (paper LGB 2/24) were approved by the LGB as a correct record.

5.1 **MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Minute 77.5: Governor Engagement Programme – Kate Need updated the LGB on progress with the issues raised by students at the June Governor Visit Morning.

- **Difficulties using the old college laptops.** 100 new laptops purchased for 2025/26 to be used mainly in classes with controlled assessments, specialist software or students for whom BYOD is not feasible. Students encouraged to BYOD as IT budget limited.
- **More interactive activities at the start of the year to help students make new friends.** Included in start of year staff meeting, INSET session on ways to encourage small group discussions in class, buddy system in place (2nd years supporting 1st years), high take up of enrichments.
- **EPQ skills development for all students (independent research, dissertation writing, presentations etc.):** Personal Development programme covers independent study skills, oracy skills are developed throughout the curriculum and enrichment e.g. public speaking enrichment, debating society. Research skills are taught in subjects with coursework.
- **Students' Union elections to take place in tutorial sessions to encourage more students to vote.** To be included in PD programme for 2025/26.

5.2 Minute 81.1: Results day – Mark Henderson thanked those Governors who had come into College for results day. This had been a lovely celebration of students' achievements which would be reviewed later in the meeting.

6.1 **ANNUAL CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

The LGB welcomed Sally-Anne Spooner and Lucy Poynter to their meeting for the annual update on child protection and safeguarding. The LGB noted the QMC annual safeguarding report (paper LGB 3/25) as well as the updated Child protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures including the responsibilities of the Trust and LGB (Paper LGB 4/25). Sally-Anne Spooner started the update with an overview of KCSiE focusing on the changes for 2025 and discussing in more detail the impact of AI, including the harm caused to young people by AI photos and videos blurring reality. The LGB noted that part of the start of term INSET staff training had focused on improving media literacy amongst staff including identifying misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. Sally-Anne Spooner repeated some of the staff training activities for the benefit of the LGB.

6.2 Turning to the QMC safeguarding data for 2024/25 Lucy Poynter reported on the wide range of support available for QMC students including wellbeing appointments, counselling appointments and working with external agencies to support students with child protection and safeguarding issues. The LGB noted that the most common challenges for students were anxiety and family pressures, relationship issues, college difficulties and depression. Many of these issues were linked to more serious problems such as domestic violence, substance misuse and sexual harassment/abuse. Lucy Poynter reported that staff in the wellbeing team were given appropriate training for example, last year staff had training on bereavement support and this year they were having training on domestic violence.

6.3 Looking at the local context, Lucy Poynter reported that within Basingstoke and Deane the most prevalent issue was extreme right-wing ideology which included protests against refugees, the Jewish community and those involved in politics. Young people (mainly

young men) were targeted to join right wing organisations and young people in general and especially those with mental health conditions had been identified as the most vulnerable group within the Basingstoke community. The College was aware of extremist groups recruiting in the area, including, for example one group that posed as a fitness group for boys.

- 6.4 Lucy Poynter presented data on the epidemic of child sexual abuse and pornography in UK society. The LGB noted that this was an uncomfortable subject that was not easy to discuss but that the college needed to be more open about it to help support students. One of the students asked for this data to be presented in tutor sessions as slides like these might help students realise the harm being done by sexual harassment and objectification. Kate Need, Lucy Poynter and Sally-Anne Spooner agreed to look into what best to put into the Personal Development programme.
- 6.5 Those present discussed some of the ways in which the College was supporting student wellbeing, for example:
- Increased staffing in wellbeing and counselling
 - Smoothwall to prevent students accessing harmful internet content on site (although this only protected them in college as most students had access to all web content)
 - Giving students the tools to realise that they are accessing harmful internet content (disinformation, misinformation, conspiracy theories)
 - A personal development programme that included information on, for example, consent, how to keep safe, drink spiking, coercive relationships etc.
 - Ensuring that students knew where to go for support – Jackie Day and Sarah Pritchard had spoken to a wide range of students in the summer term and following this a video had been produced reminding students how to find support.
- 6.6 The LGB noted that QMC in consultation with Sarah Pritchard (Safeguarding Governor) had completed the annual Safeguarding return to Hampshire Children's Safeguarding Board. The LGB thanked Sally-Anne Spooner and Lucy Poynter for a useful and thought-provoking presentation.

Sally-Anne Spooner and Lucy Poynter left the meeting

- 7.1 **UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**
Mark Henderson started his update by reporting on the excellent results including examples of the excellent press coverage the College had received. The LGB heard several case studies of students covering those who were off to study at Oxford and Cambridge, others going on to study competitive courses such as medicine and dentistry, students gaining apprenticeships including degree apprenticeships, and students who had progressed beyond expectations moving from the Transition to Level 3 programme (previously Aspire) to Level 3 courses and now to university.
- 7.2 Mark Henderson reported on other activity at the end of the Summer Term:
- The successful social action project with students gaining organisational skills whilst raising £30k for charities of their choice.
 - For the first time, 75% of first year students had undertaken meaningful work experience (face-to-face, virtual or Challenges Abroad)
 - The College had won the Destination Basingstoke, Best Place to Work award for 2025.
- 7.3 The LGB noted the most recent Org Chart (paper LGB 5/25). Mark Henderson reported that Caroline Watson (Assistant Principal Organisational Support) had now retired and her work had split between members of SLT and the new Executive Assistant

(replacement Principal's PA). Further reorganisations were planned during this academic year.

- 7.4 The LGB noted student enrolments as at 23rd September 2025 (paper LGB 6/25). Mark Henderson reported that, although the College had anticipated slightly higher student numbers in 2025 enrolment had been below target and there were likely to be 100 fewer students than planned at the census point. The LGB noted that the enrolment data would be analysed along with travel to learn data (numbers of students leaving Basingstoke for post 16 education) and discussed some of the potential reasons for the enrolment numbers.

- Students not doing well in GCSE Maths and English and going to BCoT for Level 2 studies
- The very competitive nature of post-16 education in the region and students going to colleges they perceive to be better/more academic.

- 7.5 Mark Henderson answered a number of questions from Local Governors.

How was recruitment from targeted schools? Recruitment from most local schools has been good and the others would be reviewed.

Was this due to demographics? No - there is a gentle increase in the 16-19 demographic group in Basingstoke over the next few years.

This would impact College finances, would this impact the teaching staff? Savings would need to be made and it was the responsibility of the Trust Board and SLT to maintain quality of teaching with the finances available.

8.1 **REVIEW OF OUTCOMES AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

Kate Need reported on the Summer 2025 results – QMC had achieved a headline achievement rate for 2024/25 of 89.8% compared to rates of 86.8% in 2023/24 and 89.4% in 2022/23.

Kate Need highlighted that:

- This was the first year of 'normal in normal out' with the students taking their exams in summer 2025 having taken normally graded GCSEs.
- The GCSE resit outcomes had been excellent, well above both the national data and sixth from college data.
- The 'Six Dimensions Report' analysed data from similar 16-19 institutions and provided useful context and value added benchmarking for QMC. QMC's data had improved from 2024 with a value of -0.01 (1% of student entries were 1 grade below expected). This figure had improved year on year from -0.17 in 2023 and -0.08 in 2024.
- Achievement data included a factor for student retention, and it was the College's achievement figures, rather than results, that impacted its funding.

- 8.2 The LGB noted benchmarking data from the six dimensions report comparing student achievement with their average GCSE point scores – students at all entry bands achieved very close to their expected A Level grades. More detailed analysis broke down the data by various JEDI (Justice, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion factors) which ranged from -0.28 for students in the bottom income quartile to +0.27 for students receiving free College meals. Kate Need also reported on the detail within the value-added figures by course and the LGB noted that this data would be further analysed in curriculum areas as part of the SAR process.

- 8.3 The LGB were pleased to hear a number of other positive updates:

- Of the 18 Aspire students from 2022 who finished in 2025, 11 were going onto university and 1 had secured an internship.

- Initial destination data for the 2025 cohort showed that 69% of students who took A Levels progressed to HE of which 36% went to a Sutton 30 University (Sutton Trust's list of the 30 most selective universities).
- HESA data for 2023/24 university outcomes again showed that students from QMC received more first class and upper second degrees than those from state schools and from all sixth form colleges, both at Russell Group universities and all UK universities.

8.4 The LGB agreed to confidentially review subject level data after the main LGB meeting.

9.1 **REPORT FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Irate Odewale and Maya Barton reported on Students' Union activity. The SU were meeting regularly and were currently planning a 'Hello Yellow' event for Young Minds World Mental Health Day on 10th October. In response to a question, Irate Odewale reported that the SU had discussed moving the elections and that elections would take place in tutorial sessions this year.

9.2 The LGB noted that the company that one of the Local Governor's worked for was open to bids for funding as part of their Corporate Responsibility activity and asked the Student Representatives to discuss any potential projects that would benefit the student body.

Action: potential SU funding bid **SU**

9.3 One of the Parent Governors asked if the College Library could be open later for students (currently closes at 5pm). Kate Need reported that access to the library was dependent on staffing. College buses left just after 4pm and the Help Desk closed at 5pm after which time there were not enough staff on site to keep the library open. Mark Henderson reported that the library was open for students during the holidays and half term breaks.

10.1 **GOVERNOR ENGAGEMENT 2025/26 – standing item**

The LGB noted that the next Governor Visit morning would take place on Thursday 16th October and would include a 2nd year tutorial session and the Performing Arts Curriculum Area.

10.2 The LGB noted dates for the annual SAR meetings in November. Mark Henderson reminded the LGB that this was a good way for them to observe the process of quality improvement in the College. David O'Donnell invited Local Governors to attend one of these meetings, however, priority would be given to curriculum areas that had not been covered recently and Local Governors who had not yet attended one of these meetings.

Action: Governors to attend SAR meetings **TBN**

10.3 The LGB noted a report of Kirsten Johnson's Careers visit at the end of the Summer Term (paper LGB 8-25). Kate Need reported that Kirsten, along with herself and Victoria Renault, carried out a self-assessment of Careers Impact Maturity using the model statements produced by the Careers and Enterprise Company. The report will be used for the 2025 SAR and to inform future activity.

11.1 **COMPLAINTS REPORT**

The LGB noted the annual summary of all formal complaints received during 2024/25 (paper 9/25). Toni Baldwin reported that the Trust did not receive many complaints, the seven complaints relating to QMC activity were all investigated and resolved within the year - there were no trends or equality issues. The LGB noted that several of the eight complaints from the local community were about student behaviour in the immediate area around the College (driving, parking, littering) and students will continue to be reminded to be considerate to local residents. No matters of concern were raised.

12.1 **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 10/25). David O'Donnell reminded those present that as well as reporting from the Trust to the LGB he also reported on LGB meetings to the Board, ensuring good levels of communication. The LGB noted both the 2025/26 budget and financial forecasts which had been submitted to the DfE and the Internal Audit plan for 2025/26 which was focusing on QM Leisure Ltd as well as the usual learner numbers audit.

12.2 The LGB noted the revised Scheme of Delegation (paper LGB 11/25) that had been approved by the Board of Trustees. Toni Baldwin reported that this version included the updated Committee structure as well as new role descriptors for the various Governor roles.

13.1 **GOVERNORS MONITORING INFORMATION – *standing item***

Kate Need reminded the LGB that the Autumn 1 monitoring report would come to their next meeting on 25th November 2025.

14.1 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other items of business were raised.

15. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Local Governing Body meetings

Tuesday 25th Nov 2025 at 5.30pm

Tuesday 20th Jan 2026 at 5.30pm

Tuesday 17th March 2026 at 5.30pm

Tuesday 28th April 2026 at 5.30pm

Tuesday 9th June 2026 5.30pm

Governors' Visit Mornings

Thursday 16th Oct 2025 am

Wednesday 11th Feb 2026 am

Tuesday 12th May 2026 am

Maya Barton Irate Odewale left the meeting

16.1 **CURRICULUM AREAS FOR MONITORING 2025/26**

The LGB discussed several subjects and courses noting that details would come through the course reviews and SAR process. Kate Need reported on outcomes from subjects that had been under scrutiny during 2024/25. All but two of the courses that had been monitored during 2024/25 showed improvements with some substantially improving. The two courses that had not improved would continue to be monitored during 2025/26.

16.2 The LGB noted a list of courses that had been identified for monitoring during 2025/26. Subjects or courses were on this list for a range of reasons including lower than anticipated value-added data, a low proportion of high grades or grade changes following coursework moderation. Other subject on the list were new courses or new qualifications such as the AAQ's that had replaced BTECs and subjects that had moved to a different exam board. The LGB discussed some of these subjects and some of the actions that the College was taking such as support from SLT, buddying up teachers within the College and using Wessex Group curriculum networks and other resources to support teachers who were the only ones teaching a specific subject.

Action: mid-year review of courses identified for monitoring KND

16.3 Kate Need ended her presentation by updating the LGB on curriculum changes for September 2025:

- The Extended diploma in Media and A Level Italian were not running due to low numbers.
- The newest A Level Courses had recruited well – Statistics, Environmental Sciences which had started in 2024 and English Language and Literature which was starting in 2025.

approved

- The JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) had produced new guidelines for Exam Access Arrangements. Fewer students would be awarded extra time and teachers would also be required to provide evidence to support any access arrangements. The sector had not been given much time to prepare for this and was currently looking into what was required. The LGB noted that this change was in response to both the increase in and inconsistencies in extra time awarded across the sector.

The Chair thanked those present and the meeting ended at 7.30pm

For approval at the meeting on 25th November 25

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	Timescale	Responsibility
Minute 3.1: review of LGB roles	November 2025	DOL/TBN
Minute 9.2: potential SU funding bid	2025/26	SU
Minute 10.2: Governors to attend SAR meetings	November 2026	TBN
Minute 16.1: mid-year review of courses identified for monitoring	March 2026	KND

Toni Baldwin
Academy Secretary, Queen Mary's College