



**RICHARD HUISH TRUST
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE & QUALITY COMMITTEE**

25th February 2025 at 10.00am

Rowan Committee Room and Teams

Present: Clare Greenslade (Chair)
Tim Duffen

In Attendance: John Abbott – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Steve Chattell - Chief People Officer (CPO)
Paul Lonsdale – Chief Finance Officer (CFO)
Dave MacCormick – External Adviser

For relevant sections as indicated:
Barbara Barratt – Chair of College Governing Body
Emma Fielding – Principal of RHC
Shelagh Pritchard – Acting Chair of Pyrland School
Joanne James – Acting Headteacher of Pyrland School
Adrian Reynolds – Deputy Headteacher, Pyrland School

Clerk: Helen Wells (Governance Specialist)

MINUTES

		Action
APQ 24/89	1. MEETING FORMALITIES 1.1 Apologies for absence and minutes from last meeting The Chair welcomed attendees and made introductions. There were apologies from Roz Abbott.	
APQ 24/90	1.2 Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest.	
APQ 24/91	1.3 Previous minutes Directors approved the minutes from the last meeting and the Chair consented for her electronic signature to be added.	
APQ 24/92	1.4 Matters arising The paper with matters arising was reviewed and updates/completed items noted or discussed by the committee and recorded on the paper.	
	2. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE The CEO gave an overview for the committee about the context and purpose of the meeting.	
APQ 24/93	2.1 Richard Huish College The chair welcomed Barbara Barratt and Emma Fielding to the meeting. The Principal noted key updates in relation to the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).	
APQ 24/94	By defining what effective assessment is it has helped focus the approach on achieving it. The use of key data over time has helped to identify areas where challenges exist to achieve effective assessment. Teams have been tasked with producing an assessment map that will sit alongside student's curriculum maps and will be available from September. The potential of Artificial	

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Intelligence (AI) for assessment is being examined as to how it may enable more assessment with quicker feedback to help enhance student progress.

**APQ
24/95**

Student oracy is becoming well embedded, with students who are increasingly able to articulate the purpose oracy plays in their education. The impact is being measured with students through timely surveys. The principal noted useful connections being made around gender balance in classrooms from recent research. The Principal noted some recent achievements including that the college is in the final of the bar mock trials in London following winning the regional heats, and that students are through to the Oxford debating finals and National Gallery oracy competitions. She added that the Student Executive are undertaking an action research project which is an exciting development.

**APQ
24/96**

The key areas of focus for sustainability are currently on education, including 25 students who have signed up to a Carbon Literacy qualification. Work is underway with a new food catering company looking into food waste recycling. Tutorials include a sustainability tip each week, tied into marketing campaigns and 400 trees being planted at Ash Meadows soon, following the 450 planted last year.

**APQ
24/97**

Other notable updates included:

- Changes to the law classrooms to replicate a court room which have been purpose built to include a live link to the adjacent classrooms to enable interaction, opened by a local MP. Students and staff are very engaged by the facilities and opportunities they will offer.
- Degree classifications for students who have progressed to university are particularly strong in the last set of results (taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data from 2022/2023), exceeding outcomes from notable key groups including the independent sector.
- DfE performance tables demonstrate strong performance for value added, sitting significantly above the sector average and is 12th out of 168 colleges for progress, placing RHC within the top 7%.

**APQ
24/98**

Directors noted the quality of approaches taken by the college and how quick they are to recognise and address gaps. The principal noted that this reflects on how effectively the management team are using data to help focus questions that sit alongside well-established dynamic processes and ways of working. The Chair of Governors (CoG) noted that this has also translates into usable and meaningful information for governors in the form of a dashboard to identify key information.

**APQ
24/99**

Is there anything that has not worked as well as hoped this year?

The new national approach to the BTECs has proven challenging due to how last minute the changes have been and the outcomes anticipated have not panned out. Numbers are falling and this is forcing decisions to be made earlier than expected. Knowing how to advise future students on their studies is difficult as is trying to mitigate the impact of the potential of having students with no study programme option. The college is looking to adapt packages to specifically support those learners, the concern is that there may still be a group for whom this does not work. There are also pastoral concerns in the level and complexity of support they may require.

**APQ
24/100**

The principal noted that safeguarding incidents have grown notably over recent years; there are plans in place to address the growth and maintain the quality of the service already offered but further resource will be needed to support this. DM observed that students can become reliant on support services at secondary and linked research around this that helps illustrate the point. It was also noted that support services elsewhere are incredibly stretched leaving the college to pick up those needs.

ACTION: Share link on research about reliance on mental health services in schools.

DM

**APQ
24/101**

The CoG confirmed governors are aware of the pressures facing the safeguarding team and that there is a need for action to be taken to enable it to continue to respond effectively to the current level of need.

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- APQ 24/102** **How do you work specifically with Pyrland School to ensure that those in Y9, 10 and 11 are clear on their progression pathways and partnership opportunities?**
This has largely focused on the work of the college's School Liaison Team. The impact of this is an increase in numbers year on year with those who progress on to the college from the school. They have an enhanced plan (compared to what is offered at most other schools) from Y7 to Y11 offering different sessions, such as experience days, in addition to offering Information and Guidance (IAG) sessions. Curriculum partnering is growing (for example with Joint Practice Development links in science) but there is opportunity to explore this further.
- APQ 24/103** **Has there been impactful work to help leaders improve the curriculum to build back from the KS5 curriculum?**
This is not currently a specific area of work. The focus is on the IAG and progression.
- APQ 24/104** **How many students progressed from Pyrland School recently?**
It has increased year on year, exact numbers can be provided.
ACTION: Send the committee latest progression data from Pyrland School to RHC **EF**
- APQ 24/105** **At the last meeting it was noted that those with lower GCSE grades are more likely to leave before completing their studies, has anything progressed with addressing this?**
The data confirms that disadvantaged students with low GCSE point entry scores are particularly prone to leaving before they complete their studies. Ways in which to retain these students has been investigated and at another college (BHASVIC) a small group of students were identified to take part in a mentoring programme which focuses on positivity with a lead mentor (advocate), the impact there has been phenomenal so a similar approach is being considered for RHC.

The chair thanked the Principal for attending; Emma Fielding left the meeting.
- APQ 24/106** **The CoG noted the approach taken by the college. Governors remain feeling very well informed about the QIP which includes the headline data and an opportunity for a more detailed examination of curriculum quality through their dedicated committee. This provides opportunity for dialogue with, and scrutiny of curriculum leads.**
- APQ 24/107** **The areas of challenge around T-Levels and disadvantaged students are a key focus as there is an opportunity for the college to work through the provision of blended bespoke programmes for specific groups of students. She noted the how excellent the oracy activities are, particularly their representation in external environments. Benchmarking with other sixth forms to identify and share best practice remains an important area of work.**
- APQ 24/108** **The governing body are making greater demands for how the college is promoted and celebrated more widely. They recognise the need for this to be done sensitively, but in a way that celebrates the success and opportunity of the college. This will be presented to the college governing board in July. The committee discussed the current approach to how marketing is undertaken by the college. The purpose of the marketing was discussed, including that the desired impact of the marketing must be considered both in financial and reputational terms and should be specific in its intention of what its purpose is.**

The chair thanked the CoG for attending; Barbara Barratt left the meeting.
- 2.2 Pyrland School**
The chair welcomed Shelagh Pritchard, Joanne James and Adrian Reynolds to the meeting.

The headteacher provided an overview of priority 1 'Develop a whole school culture of reading' of the QIP.
- APQ 24/109** **What diagnostic testing is being used?**
Reading Plus is now used as it's designed to be more engaging to students and tests on a range of factors, enabling reward and celebration of different aspects of the reading journey, including

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a parental report that can be shared. Older students are using Lucid Exact to address their particular stage of reading.

APQ 24/110 **What is the link with staff training to deliver the output from the diagnostic tools?**
Staff training strategies have been linked with where students are identified as struggling the most, based on the output from the tools.

APQ 24/111 **What is being done to support students who start in Year 7 that are not reading at the expected level?**
This year Y7's intake are benefitting from links on reading with the progression from primary to secondary. Unlike in the national data boys reading is not of a significant concern; in some instances, girls are proving more challenging than the boys.

APQ 24/112 **The CEO noted that this area of the QIP was presented to inspectors including to the same inspector who previously gave positive feedback at the last monitoring visit. The feedback from the latest inspection was that despite the intent being evident, the impact of the actions has not yet been realised. The school noted that this is to be expected with the timeline of implementation. The important thing for the school is that there is a comprehensive and well managed package in place to improve reading.**

APQ 24/113 **How many children are meeting age related expectations (ARE) in relation to reading upon entry to the school?**
About 30% of children are at ARE, nationally the average is about 68% so the data here is very low by comparison.

APQ 24/114 **Are children keen on reading?**
It is hard to tell with teenage children. Directors noted that at primary level there is also more reticence to engage with reading than previously. It is important to get children used to reading and enabling them to read for pleasure in an inclusive way. The research shows if you can be good at something you tend to end up enjoying it.

APQ 24/115 **Is there transition work to be undertaken at KS2?**
There is scope for this. The transition package is developing and could include the use of reading ambassadors within primary schools. There are opportunities to explore this further with the primary schools.

APQ 24/116 **The deputy headteacher then gave an overview of priority 2, behaviour.**
Directors noted the complexity of the issues in hand in relation to behaviour.

APQ 24/117 **What proportion of classrooms have learning as completely disruption free?**
There is no data to illustrate this accurately, there are hotspots with disruptive students. The DHT described how most classes he visits are not experiencing disruption at the time.

APQ 24/118 **How many are not in lessons at any given time?**
At start of lessons 20-30 students are normally roaming, after the first 15-20 mins they have been placed appropriately leaving a handful who have subsequently left lessons or been sent out.

APQ 24/119 **How many students in a lesson go to Darwin?**
The room holds 15 students and at any one time it is anecdotally 8-9, previously it was consistently full.

APQ 24/120 **How effective are reintegration meetings with students following suspensions?**
Effectiveness is varied; suspensions tend to be repetitively with the same students. There is a new Assess Do Plan Review (ADPR) process which looks at behaviour over time, rather than just the individual instances of suspension. It is yet to be determined whether this is having a positive impact. This is helping to ensure that things are not missed for individual students, this includes regular audits of all steps of support for the highest priority students.

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APQ 24/121 Behaviour is improving although not fast enough, but improvement is being seen across the board for different groups of students. The committee discussed the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with families on the basis of a partnership approach, which is supported by evidence as being impactful. This is being broached by the ADPR approach so that there is a consistent contact each time behaviour issues arise. The ADPR plan is developed with the family.

APQ 24/122 **What is the level of confidence that staff know and understands how to implement the graduated response?**

All staff need to be aware of the universal approach of the response, but do not need to know the intricacies of the whole process. SLT and heads of year are well versed in the detail and support others who interact with parts of the process accordingly.

APQ 24/123 **How can behaviour improve faster?**

This is about consistent support for the families to address concerns earlier, but can involve a variety of staff depending on who is available at the time.

APQ 24/124 Due to time and the importance of focus on behaviour, the committee agreed that priority 3 could be picked up through other means.

ACTION: Summary update of Pyrland School's QIP priority 3 to be shared with the committee.

HT

The headteacher and deputy headteacher left the meeting.

APQ 24/125 The committee discussed the implementation of the behaviour strategy and how critical it is that it is impactful. Directors highlighted that improvements in behaviour underpin other improvements at the school in the long term. The committee discussed with the CoG that remains important that the school's governing board can pose rigour and challenge.

APQ 24/126 The committee discussed offers of support from local MATs which could include governance and leadership.

The chair thanked CoG for attending, and she left the meeting.
DM left the meeting; the chair thanked him for his attendance.

2.3 Committee matters

APQ 24/127 Directors briefly reflected on the meeting.

3. OTHER MATTERS

3.1 Any other business

APQ 24/128 The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 6th March 2025 to meet with each of the primary academies.

The meeting concluded at 1.15pm

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