



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

**6<sup>th</sup> November 2025 9.00am**

**Rowan House Committee Room, Richard Huish College**

**Present:** Tim Duffen (Chair)  
Tina Wilkes

**In attendance:** John Abbott – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
Steve Chattell - Chief People Officer (CPO)  
Rachel Higginson – External Adviser  
Roz Abbott – MIS Manager

**For sections as indicated:**

Nerrols Primary School:  
Matt Kerton – Headteacher  
Wendy Devereux - Chair of Governors

Lyngford Park Primary School:  
Nick Arnold – Headteacher

North Town Primary School:  
Mark Braund – Headteacher

West Buckland Primary School:  
Cameron Mann – Headteacher  
Kerry Palmer-Roberts – Chair of Governors

North Curry Primary School:  
Helen Morley – Headteacher  
Gill Slocombe – Chair of Governors

Richard Huish College  
Emma Fielding – Principal  
Barbara Barratt – Chair of Governors

**Clerk:** Helen Wells – Governance Specialist

**MINUTES**

		Action
<b>APQ 25/01</b>	<b>1. MEETING FORMALITIES</b>	
	<b>1.1 Welcome and apologies</b> The chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and made introductions. There were apologies from committee member Andrea Marshall. Apologies were also received from Faye Forsyth, Chair of Governors for Lyngford Park Primary School and Derek Perry, Vice Chair of Governors for North Town Primary School.	
<b>APQ 25/02</b>	<b>1.2 Declarations of interest</b> There were no declarations of interest for the meeting specifically.	
<b>APQ 25/03</b>	<b>1.3 Previous minutes</b> The minutes from 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2025 and 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025 were agreed as being correct.	

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

**APQ**      **1.4 Matters arising**  
**25/04**      The matters arising were reviewed.

## **2. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY**

**APQ**      The CEO provided context for directors and attendees about the meeting and the academies  
**25/05**      being met with. He described the process of quality improvement at Huish with the use of Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs), which draws on established good practice in the FE sector and has been introduced into the rest of the MAT to help secure meaningful quality improvement over time. It includes opportunity for the improvement of governance with the inclusion of Chairs of Governors in the meetings and to seek assurance for directors about the quality of local governance in improving standards locally. The focus of this meeting was to explore and establish that the priorities chosen by the academies and supported by their LGB will underpin improvement, are based on appropriate evidence available and can be resourced effectively.

### **APQ**      **2.1 NERROLS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**25/06**      The chair welcomed the headteacher and chair of governors from the school to the meeting. Presentations about the priorities were given by the headteacher.

#### **APQ**      **Priority 1 – Play: Extend the current principles of play and outdoor learning into all** **25/07**      **aspects of teaching and learning within the school.**

The headteacher gave an overview of the reasons for choosing this priority including how to explore risk taking within teaching and learning for both pupils and staff. The priority seeks to encourage careful planning, reflection and celebrating of where there are successes. It is intended to help contribute to pupils improving their learning by being enabled to be more confident in taking part in activities. They have considered a range of measures to seek to understand whether and to what extent this priority has an impact.

**APQ**      The committee discussed the evidence basis being used by the school for their approach to  
**25/08**      taking risks with this priority. The committee agreed with the suggestion of the external adviser that this should be confidently referenced and to consider any research contributions from the books 'The Anxious Generation' and 'The Self Determination Theory'. They discussed how this approach could sit within the core values/vision of the school to help permeate further and to help it weave into the fabric of the culture of the school.

#### **APQ**      **Key Performance Indicators**

**25/09**      Pre and post qualitative surveys with every child were scheduled for the following week to understand distance travelled with the pupils, questions will include about risks on learning. Case studies are planned to have a focus on children who may particularly benefit from this priority. Directors discussed how younger pupils will meaningfully participate in the survey; the school had considered this and will use a different approach to gathering this tailored to that age group.

#### **APQ**      **Priority 2 – Becoming trauma informed: To evolve the current culture, philosophy and** **25/10**      **systems to ensure that children are effectively supported as the school grows to its full occupancy.**

The headteacher described the context in deciding to have this as a priority, including the careful development of underpinning policies including the Anti-Bullying policy. The school has been working intentionally towards achieving the status of a 'Trauma Informed School'. They have been working closely with Huish's Director of Behaviour and Intervention to ensure there is expert input and support along with ongoing guidance and an evidence based approach.

**APQ**      They are currently working on 'The Kindness Project' this seeks to reward and recognise small  
**25/11**      acts of kindness taken by the children at school and to help support them with their journey to becoming kind and thoughtful individuals. This is an evidence-based approach to developing positive behaviours at the school which includes involvement of parents and carers. It is hoped that this will help establish norms and expectations of behaviour from the school community. It

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

links in well to the school establishing a robust approach to bullying through making kindness central to behaviour.

**APQ 25/12**      **The kindness project is a one-year project, how does this influence the journey towards achieving the trauma informed award?**

This ties in directly to achieving this award and it is hoped the school will achieve this next year.

**APQ 25/13**      The external adviser highlighted that considering this approach within the context of the self-determination approach to ensure that it is important to ensure that there is a constant self-reflection of acts of kindness and conduct to ensure it does not detract from the intrinsic self.

**APQ 25/14**      **How does this link into the first priority?**

The committee considered about how the priorities are intrinsically interlinked and are both are important as each other.

**APQ 25/15**      **What exactly is driving this particular priority? Is it in response to a particular issue?**

This is the result of long consideration about what does it mean to be a pupil at Nerrols in the context of it being a new school and new community. The school has considered how to develop its culture and connect with the community and to understand what they want; feedback shows that parents predominantly want their children to be happy at school.

It is not in response to a particular issue but is in recognition of Nerrols being a school that is, and will be, growing significantly and quickly in the near future; it's about building the culture and ensuring it is fit for the future. These two priorities are therefore about building culture.

**APQ 25/16**      **Priority 3 – The Huish Pledge: To devise, define and implement a Huish Pledge.**

This is the first year of introducing a cross-trust common priority where the schools work together to be enabled to join in unfamiliar and beneficial activities beyond the taught curriculum. This year the focus is developing the approach ready to introduce it next year.

**APQ 25/17**      **Will there be common activities or will there be a 'Nerrols flavour' to it?**

There will be commonalities across the schools but there will be a Nerrols strand to it where, for example, it may differ from what the small village schools might prioritise for example. There is consultation with parents about the sorts of activities their children do normally participate in so they can be confident what they are offering fits expectations.

**APQ 25/18**      The external adviser highlighted that the curriculum should be enriching anyway; this pledge should offer extraordinary and ambitious activities that are clearly defined within or without the curriculum. Directors discussed that there is specific direction in the curriculum about enrichment which should not be lost, supporting that the pledge activities should be beyond this. The CEO added that this is the result of discussions between the schools which serve different communities, have different financial profiles and have different definitions of what might be understood as aspirational. There is also a tension in terms of equity across the schools but opportunity in terms of efficiencies for some aspects of organisation.

**APQ 25/19**      The external adviser highlighted and praised the journey the school have been on, and the distance travelled in its development.

*The headteacher left the meeting.*

**APQ 25/20**      **How much time does the LGB spend in its meetings focusing on the QIP?**

The Chair of Governors described how she meets regularly with the headteacher for 1:1 meetings and that the QIP is the central focus, with a significant amount of time spent discussing it, at every LGB meeting. She added that there is also regular engagement by governors with the school and this has been helpful in understanding the school's journey to becoming a trauma informed school.

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

- APQ 25/21** **Do all governors agree with the content of the QIP?**  
She confirmed that all governors are fully supportive of the QIP, but there has been some discussion about the third priority and its ultimate benefits as enrichment should be happening anyway. The challenge will be ensuring the schools work well together. Another challenge has been pushing beyond the easier to achieve activities to something more aspirational.
- APQ 25/22** The committee discussed whether it would be beneficial for the LGB to help the school's leaders understand that the first two priorities sit within the broader umbrella of the school's cultural development. The Chair of Governors agreed to explore this at next governors meeting and described how the culture of the school is an ongoing discussion for governors. The school is now in a good position with the composition of the pupils and staff to move this forward; she reflected that it is incredibly complex building a new culture with a new community and these priorities are timely and apt.
- APQ 25/23** **Do both the QIP leads attend the LGB regularly?**  
No, just one of them.
- APQ 25/24** Attendees discussed some of the wider contextual considerations about moving forward with the two first priorities and whether there are any areas of support that might be helpful.
- APQ 25/25** The CEO asked whether the Chair of Governors felt that having a more direct and regular communication with the directors via LGB meeting output? She agree this would be helpful.
- APQ 25/26** The committee thanked the Chair of Governors for her continued and longstanding involvement with the school.

*The Chair of Governors left the meeting.*

## 2.2 LYNCFORD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

- APQ 25/27** The chair welcomed the headteacher from the school to the meeting and introductions were made, unfortunately the Chair of Governors was unable to attend.
- APQ 25/28** **Priority 1 – Oracy: Continue to improve every child's confidence and communication skills through oracy.**  
Oracy is in its second year as a priority; as part of a planned three-year focus. It was identified as a key priority for the school after they considered ways in which the local community communicates and therefore expresses how they value each other's views. The school is ultimately trying to ensure reading, writing maths improve overall as this is what they are judged on. For the headteacher it is more than speaking and listening, it is about addressing communication for children and parents in a media-based society and taking into account that one in three children speak English as Another Language (EAL) at the school.
- APQ 25/29** The committee discussed the dynamic with the parents and how the school seeks to reach out into the wider community for meaningful engagement and enact oracy through listening and understanding the community. The headteacher has joined Citizen Somerset and has been involved with community improvements. The external adviser suggested that it might help the strategic focus of the school in this area to build a single statement that comes from what he understands oracy means for the school, its pupils and the local community.
- APQ 25/30** The committee reflected on development of oracy at the school, agreeing that ideally the school will move beyond oracy as a tool for learning to it becoming an intrinsic part of the culture of the school.
- APQ 25/31** The External Adviser recommended consulting the book 'The Culture Trap' and the approach to political listening to actively seek to listen to differing views among the community.

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

**APQ 25/32** **Is there anything that is happening with regard to other strands within the early years, particularly prior to the pupils joining the school?**

Home visits take place in September prior to the children starting at the school, there is some involvement from the school nurse. The school's nursery and reception are now very integrated, for example about how they engage with phonics together. There are a number of pupils who arrive at reception who are not school ready, but this number has reduced over time. The school try to offer multiple opportunities to meet with the parents, but the most important focus is the relational approach to engaging with parents. The nursery is growing and is now able to take children at an earlier stage and provide a more consistent approach and start into school as result. The parents of the nursery children are actively engaged with in a range of ways to try and work with oracy at that stage prior to their child(ren) joining the school.

**APQ 25/33** **Priority 2 – Technology: Improve the use of technology as an effective aid to teaching and learning.**

This was chosen as a priority due to the increasing profile and changing technology in wider society. An audit was undertaken on the existing technologies used within the school and the training available for staff on using them. The school has linked up with a company called Vex where children learn to engage with robot technologies. The intended impact is to improve the confidence of the staff and children in using technology and therefore improving teaching and learning approaches. The main challenge is around resourcing updating technology at the school and to keep it updated with the pace of current change. The main driver for the children is to use a range of technology effectively, beyond gaming and social media.

**APQ 25/34** The committee agreed that the priority, particularly in relation to oracy and the focus of the national curriculum currently, is timely and on point. The data is strong around the overuse of technology at home. The committee considered that the curriculum with computing within it could link into other areas, e.g. how to use technology better within a range of curriculum areas, the skills children are learning to interact in a technological world, what are the skills the children need to be learning? The committee considered how technology could be used to enable more adaptive teaching; to enable teachers to embrace technology to meet the children's needs more precisely. Attendees discussed engaging children in conversations on thinking about how they might want to use technology to improve what they are doing.

**APQ 25/35** **Priority 3 – The Huish Pledge: Develop and embed 'The Huish Pledge' so children have enhanced provision and experience**

The committee agreed that they felt this had been addressed in the previous item as it is a shared priority.

Instead, the committee used the time to consider the possible development of an SEN hub at the school.

**APQ 25/36** The headteacher described that there is capacity within the school premises to accommodate a facility. This is due to the falling roll due to consolidating the PAN to give a single form entry and single classes of 30 pupils in each year group. The Local Authority (LA) have a current priority and funding to establish SEN centres within the community. Pupils benefitting from the centre are likely to be allocated by the LA from other schools and would become part of the Lyngford Park school community and therefore would be put on their roll. There is a 3-class block which could be renovated to self-contained classrooms. The CEO outlined that it feels like a good and positive thing to do for the wider community and will help introduce funding and regeneration to increasingly underused school buildings; the opportunity is attuned with the values of the trust. There are concerns about the longer-term impact on the school being a mainstream school and other funding strands it could impact.

**APQ 25/37** **Will the facility help the school to be able to provide provision for the immediate local community? Will there be consultation with the local community if this moves forwards?**

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

There could be consultation, but it is not required; it is the right thing to do though so would be part of the consideration if this does move forward. The details of how the provision is allocated will need to be fully understood.

**APQ  
25/38**

The external adviser recommended a contact at another school who has introduced this approach successfully; there were reservations about the labelling and concept of establishing the facility separately from the mainstream offer. They have intentionally introduced it in a very integrated way. This was carefully considered as part of the strategy along with the impact on the school. The committee considered that there would be opportunity to negotiate the financing and to consider the admissions policy along with expanding the provision for the community. The curriculum will need revisiting to ensure it includes specific provision that will meet the needs of incoming children and how they will be fully part of the school whilst respecting safeguarding etc.

*The headteacher left the meeting.*

**APQ  
25/39**

### **2.3 NORTH TOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The chair welcomed the headteacher to the meeting and introductions were made. Unfortunately, neither the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors were able to attend. The CEO suggested it would be helpful to meet with them following the meeting.

**ACTION: To meet with the Chair of Governors to update regarding the AP&Q process and QIP priorities for the school** **CEO**

**APQ  
25/40**

#### **Priority 1 – Writing: Strengthen writing pedagogy across the school to support all children to become lifelong writers.**

The headteacher described why this continues as a priority; he identified a wider need to improve writing including the approach and understanding by staff which he observed resulted in a lack of rigour and focus. There has been progress made, but it remains a challenge that needs addressing over time. The headteacher recognises the need to help children grow a love for writing. The school has changed its timetable to build consistency in the approach to writing across the school and to build in every opportunity for this to improve. Teachers are working in a timelier way to identify and address writing with the children. Grammar was identified and addressed as a significant shortfall in the ability of the children. Staff have benefitted from a range of CPD to help ensure they possess the skills and understanding to have a meaningful impact. The school provides opportunities for staff to meet, reflect on, and share what is working and what is not. The headteacher was open in acknowledging this priority has been, and remains, a significant challenge.

**APQ  
25/41**

The committee welcomed the honesty of the headteacher in the challenge faced in this area. The committee praised the headteacher regarding the approach he is taking in addressing this priority area.

**APQ  
25/42**

#### **Priority 2 – Oracy: To improve communication and language skills in EYFS through intentional, high-quality adult-child interactions.**

This priority arose out of observations of the way in which parents can be distracted by their phones, the wider pressures in society for families and the high percentage of the school community who have EAL. The headteacher gave an overview of specific interventions to help address areas of this. There is a need for staff training for those involved with EYFS to upskill them in high quality interactions, including for teaching assistants. He provided an overview of a range of activities and intentional actions to help this priority to have meaningful impact.

**APQ  
25/43**

The external adviser noted that the priority and actions towards achieving it are intentional. The adviser highlighted the benefit of visiting another school who have successfully impacted upon their EAL pupils. She suggested looking at the environment of the provision in a broader context to see if there are any other factors impacting on progress being made in this area and to

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

consider other ways in which oracy can be brought into the teaching and learning. She encouraged the headteacher to continue to think deeply and consider how to encourage quality of oracy development for the early years stages.

**APQ  
25/44**

Directors agreed the importance of establishing these high-quality interactions, but that it is equally important to maintain throughout the school and not just in early years. The external adviser highlighted how West Buckland have adapted approaches which would be helpful to explore across KS1 to KS2.

**APQ  
25/45**

**Priority 3 – To implement the Huish Pledge across all Huish primaries.**

The headteacher confirmed he welcomed and recognised what the priority is trying to achieve. He added that he feels the priority should be publicised.

Directors explored whether there is the ability to link the third priority into the other two priorities and what it means for the school locally as well as in a trust wide context.

**APQ  
25/46**

The committee discussed the school's assessment of the key risks facing the school which have been graded as high around the funding and resourcing particularly for SEN children and the quality of the outdoor facilities. The headteacher cited frustrations in the delay in the release of funding for higher needs children by the LA.

**APQ  
25/47**

The CEO noted that the school's attendance has been above the national average for the last three years and congratulated the headteacher, who highlighted that this in the context of increasing profile of traditionally poorer attendance groups.

The external adviser praised the headteacher about his approach and openness in considering the scale of the challenges and the resulting intentional and strategic approaches being taken.

*The headteacher left the meeting.*

**APQ  
25/48**

**2.4 WEST BUCKLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The chair welcomed headteacher and chair of governors from the school to the meeting and introductions were made.

**APQ  
25/49**

**Priority 1 – Equitable provision for all**

The headteacher outlined that this priority is to ensure that all groups of learners have the same level of access to teaching and learning. This is to help tackle the mainstream approach of giving ongoing interventions for individual pupils. With the growth of the nursery provision and increasing recruitment of nursery pupils into the school, there is greater opportunity to start the process of learning the needs of each child from a very young age and to capitalise on this for their whole journey through the school.

**APQ  
25/50**

This priority is about pre-planning for knowing the needs of individual children before they enter a new year group/teaching cycle, rather than holding retrospective interventions to address shortcomings in the learning that has taken place. It is also about ensuring children are ready for the next stage of their school journey and learning.

**APQ  
25/51**

**What do you mean by the 'same level of progress' being made across all groups in the plan?**

It is about to manage the process of progress being made, what that looks like at each level and how the school can help them succeed. Attendees discussed being conscious about how children are planned for and supported, particularly around the semantics and how it is communicated with staff. This could be more about making progress than meeting a set idea of a standard. The external adviser highlighted the slight slant towards Ofsted priorities which needs to be balanced with the moral direction of what the priority is intending to achieve.

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

**APQ  
25/52**

**Priority 2 – Extending elements of KS1 provision into lower KS2**

This priority builds on the priorities in previous years and looks to extend it beyond KS1 to encompass the whole school. There are some challenges with this in terms of the differences needed in years 5 and 6, particularly with preparation for secondary school. There are specific areas that will be focused on and the headteacher noted some particular challenges that will need to be carefully considered. It has been partly driven by seeing the experience of a specific group of pupils moving through the school and seeing the impact of the continuous provision dropping away as they move up. The headteacher cited some of the positive impacts it has had at KS1.

**APQ  
25/53**

The external adviser concurred that there will be challenges in extending the continuous provision which will centre on ensuring the provision is sophisticated enough to address the needs of the older year groups. Alternatively, there are other models that could be considered for example, structured teaching that moves into innovation to apply their learning. She highlighted the value of seeking additional input in helping staff understand the value and potential to ensure there are sufficient skills available to make this a success. The headteacher noted he had seen the positive impact this approach has had at another school, where their continuous provision is well established but has been a brave move; it has delivered rigorous outcomes and continues to have a positive impact which is very inspiring.

**APQ  
25/54**

The journey of staff in being able to introduce this successfully will be a key challenge and directors expressed they will be interested in hearing about how this develops.

**APQ  
25/55**

**Priority 3 – To devise, define and implement a Huish Pledge.**

The headteacher, whilst he welcomed the Huish Pledge highlighted that the school already has its own pledge, "The Buckland 100". The headteacher referenced another academy who has a similar approach where a trust wide approach is working well and sees the value in scaling this up at Huish whilst recognising the challenges this may produce.

*The headteacher left the meeting.*

**APQ  
25/56**

The chair of governors gave an overview about how the governing body interacts with the quality improvements underway at the school. She cited that she, along with the LGB, have observed the impact of the priorities at the school with their being children invested in their learning facilitated by the calm learning environment. The approach to a personalised curriculum which is trying to, at an individual level, help pupils to be ready to start at secondary school. She noted she is interested in how the Huish Pledge develops and how that works with the Buckland 100.

They discussed the extension of continuous provision which needs to be rigorous and of high quality. They considered how progress be monitored for the adaptive teaching approach as there will remain children who will need additional support as they will miss the main curriculum input.

**APQ  
25/57**

**What types of questions do the LGB pose about the QIP?**

The chair of governors confirmed that the LGB ask about examples of children who have started at a certain level and the progress that they've made and their readiness as an individual to start secondary school, recognising that every child is different. The LGB has a question tracker which they monitor closely but has helped them recognise that deeper questioning tends to happen in the January meeting where there is a more developed sense of understanding by the governing body of the priorities and how they are progressing.

**APQ  
25/58**

**Is there anything more the LGB could benefit from in terms of support from the trust more widely?**

She confirmed that routes to have more of a dialogue with directors would be helpful. The CEO asked whether the LGB would welcome a more direct opportunity for the LGB to have a question flow to the directors, the chair of governors confirmed that this would be welcome.

The committee expressed their thanks for the chair's ongoing support and involvement in the school.

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....



*The chair of governors left the meeting.*

## 2.5 NORTH CURRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

APQ

25/59

The chair welcomed the headteacher and chair of governors to the meeting, introductions were made.

APQ

25/60

### **Priority 1 – Children with SEND are identified earlier, supported quickly with an impactful learning plan to support progress**

The headteacher described how this priority came about but that it garnered increased impetus following the recent Ofsted report. The actions underpinning this priority focus on ensuring the systems and processes for SEND are fit for purpose and that the monitoring of progress of individual children is working to make timely interventions possible.

APQ

25/61

The external adviser noted there are number of practical approaches with this priority, and asked **What are the strategic considerations with SEND across the school?**

The headteacher outlined that it is to ensure there is time for teachers to complete paperwork associated with SEND. There is a plan to use some staff meeting time to focus on this as a team, and the working pattern of the SENCo has been reviewed. There is capacity in the school for existing experienced SEND focused staff to give support.

APQ

25/62

### **How does this relate to quality first teaching and a whole class approach to SEND?**

It ensures that the school knows all pupils are getting the right support at the right time and are making progress.

APQ

25/63

### **Priority 2 – To ensure all children are able to access a well-designed, ambitious mixed age curriculum in Science**

The headteacher described how the overall curriculum is a challenge to plot at the school due to the split age classes which change each year, making the mapping challenging in some instances. This is particularly the case with Science, which as a result, is having a complete overhaul to ensure every child is receiving their entitlement. This replicates approaches to revising other curriculum areas which have proven successful. The science lead for the school is involved in a local project to put in place support from other small schools who have to offer split class provision for the science curriculum. A rolling programme is being developed.

APQ

25/64

### **How well resourced is the science provision at the school?**

The resourcing is sufficient, but as this curriculum is revised and develops there will be a greater understanding of what exactly is needed.

APQ

25/65

### **Are staff confident about the new approach?**

Staff are engaged in the approach but not yet confident in delivering it; support is being sought and the headteacher is confident that they will achieve it well.

APQ

25/66

### **What is meant by 'standards of teaching being good if not better'?**

This is in relation to the teaching standards using the established monitoring methods in the school, which forms part of the teacher's performance management process (this does not involve a graded lesson approach).

APQ

25/67

The headteacher highlighted that the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) framework for church schools' self-evaluation has been brought together by her in the same document with the QIP priorities and highlighted the key areas within this. Directors acknowledged that it works well having it as a cohesive document drawing together the evaluation and key areas of activity for the school to address. The external adviser suggested building on this to show the cycle of progress around different actions.

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

### **Priority 3 – To devise, define and implement a Huish Pledge**

**APQ 25/68** The headteacher noted that work has been undertaken to look at how the pledge activities could be scheduled for.

#### **What does the pledge mean for North Curry?**

**APQ 25/69** It is a series of experiences we can offer our children to further enhance their life experiences.

#### **Is there anything that reflects the Church School nature of the school?**

**APQ 25/70** There are lots of links that can be drawn through this; the headteacher provided a number of examples.

**APQ 25/71** The CEO flagged that the school's attendance in the latest data release is significantly above the national average as well as the schools' KS2 SAT results this year, directors acknowledged the achievements and congratulated her.

*The headteacher left the meeting.*

**APQ 25/72** The chair of governors confirmed governors are supportive of the school who are engaged with the priorities being undertaken by the school. There has been some challenge around the third priority; this has led to some interesting discussions.

**APQ 25/73** The CEO asked if having a more specific and direct conduit of communication between the LGB and directors, where LGBs can ask for points of clarification after each meeting. The chair of governors agreed she would be supportive of this.

**APQ 25/74** The chair of governors noted the LGB will need a new SEND governor and the committee discussed ensuring the Foundation governors and the whole board feel well prepared for the next SIAMs inspection.

The committee expressed their thanks for the chair's continuous support for the school.

*The chair of governors left the meeting.*

### **2.6 RICHARD HUISH COLLEGE**

**APQ 25/75** *This item was taken after item 3.*

The chair welcomed the principal and chair of governors to the meeting and introductions were made.

**APQ 25/76** The principal gave an overview of the priorities from last year and progress made. The first priority continues into the current year with a focus on effective assessment. Work around effective assessment has been impactful with the college being in the top 10% nationally for progress in the latest round of ALPS 2 results. Results across all programmes were exceptional which suggests a strong link in progress, achievement and the focus on assessment. The assessment mapping has been a key tool which is now available to every student.

**APQ 25/77** The second priority was oracy which concluded at the end of the two years of being a priority. The principal described that oracy now feels well embedded and the distance travelled has been demonstrated through a survey taken at the start and conclusion of the focus. There was significant progress demonstrated, but there remains areas of opportunity for further improvement. It has helped students think critically in the way they talk to each other. The college are going to try for an accreditation for a Voice 21 recognition from Cambridge University and involvement into a national oracy project 'Twinkle'.

#### **What is the oracy blog?**

**APQ 25/78** This is published through the Sixth Form College Association (SFCA) and has led into networking across the sector. It has also fed into the Education Endowment Fund's (EEF's) research into this area and now features on their website. There is a positive reputation being established for the college about this. Employers have been impressed about the student's level of articulation.

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....

**APQ 25/79** The third priority focused on sustainability; this has made some progress but is a long-term plan to achieve some of the more ambitious items which is reflective of it more broadly involving a cultural shift, including educationally. The principal leads the sustainability group with support from the Director of IT and Facilities and involves other key groups from across the college. To move this forward with more pace there is greater capacity needed operationally with a new group leader who can drive this.

**APQ 25/80** **Priority 1 – Effective assessment: To further enhance student learning and outcomes through effective and sustainable assessment and linked with Priority 3 - To understand and harness the potential of AI in education, student learning and administration.**  
The principal outlined that this will focus on use of AI with humanities-based subjects; this is a thoughtful approach seeing where AI can be used to enhance progress in learning to give additional opportunities for students being supported by several action research projects. Staff are being encouraged to think carefully about what assessment means within this context. This has been considered in the context of staff workload, including marking.

**APQ 25/81** **What is in place to safeguard students with regards to AI?**  
There was a policy developed last year and systems are subsequently in place where staff want to make use of AI packages. There is an AI Lead in place now to support staff. A key challenge has been allowing students to use AI within college where parental consent is needed for under 18s due to licensing issues. Co-Pilot now have a product licensed for age 13 and above. All students are taking part in a course on how to use AI effectively to enhance their learning.

**APQ 25/82** This aspect of the priority has focused staff on exploring the meaning of assessment and building critical thinking that should underpin students' abilities to be able to manage whatever AI presents in the future by building their ability to use well-structured questioning/instructions.

**APQ 25/83** The principal highlighted that this is also within the wider context of the national sixth form curriculum reform which is proving highly challenging to manage, particularly with the new V Levels coming online which were only recently announced. The introduction and outlook for introducing these is currently highly uncertain. The current suite of qualifications will phase into the V Levels but represents further upheaval and reworking for the college to accommodate.

**APQ 25/84** There is some strategic mapping that will need to take place to identify the best fit post-16 qualifications for Huish. There has been a notable increase in EAL students which will need strategic consideration for a coordinated approach to address.

**APQ 25/85** **Priority 2 – Inclusion: To further refine our curriculum delivery and personal development opportunities so that we continue to meet the changing needs of our diverse community of students.**  
The principal emphasized that this priority is not in response to any specific challenges the data has identified; there is no significant gap in terms of this priority but there is a slight gap which is what this priority aims to address. There is a notable profile of staff who are not confident they are able to meet the growing needs of the profile of student who have specific needs. Staff are being encouraged to go back to ensuring there is quality first teaching and pedagogy balanced with specific support and confidence building. There is a focus on the student voice and their views about inclusivity this year to help inform the direction of this priority.

**APQ 25/86** Directors thanked the principal for her overview and commented on the richness of the improvement plan. The committee praised the exceptional outcomes achieved by the college.

*The principal left the meeting.*

**APQ 25/87** The chair of governors concurred with the messages from the principal, noting the immensity of the achievements by the college. She feels the governing board is very in tune with the senior leadership team and remains very positive. Governors continue to pose challenging questions supported by the two sub-committees that can look in detail at the quality of curriculum as well

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as finance. When there are areas identified by the LGB where specific improvements can be made, the senior leadership are proactive in identifying and addressing these. Course Leaders are bought into the strategic direction and cultural approach of the college. The composition of the board remains strong, but there are some vacancies coming up for key roles. The committee discussed whether there is someone on the board with knowledge/experience of sustainability, there is not but some who have a keen interest in this area, agreed it might be useful for a governor to be involved with the sustainability group. The chair emphasized that there is excitement and interest by the governing body for what is going on. They will be holding a strategy day soon to ensure they continue to be well informed on specific aspects of the college's activities.

**APQ 25/88** The committee thanked the chair of governors for her contribution and were sad to hear she would be stepping down as the chair and governor in December.

*The chair of governors left the meeting.*

**APQ 25/89** **3. OTHER MATTERS**  
*This was taken after item 2.5.*

**3.1 Committee debrief**

Directors agreed actions. They noted that there are strategic risks in relation to North Town as it is the largest primary within the trust and the most high-profile school; any decline in standards could be detrimental to the reputation of Huish.

**APQ 25/90** Directors reflected on the strategic nature of each academy's QIP noting that some schools may require more support to interrogate what the strategic approach looks like to gain strategic (not just operational) impact as a result of achieving their QIP.

Directors agreed the content of the committee's Annual report for 2024/2025.

**APQ 25/91** Directors discussed the format and approach of the committee's meetings linked to the structure of the QIP, accepting that there is room to reflect and revisit this. Directors noted that it is valuable to gain an insight into each academy. They noted it is helpful to understand the leadership within the school context and that it is clear the executive team know the academies well and are proactive in supporting them. Directors noted that there has been growth within the maturity of leadership across the schools. The determining of strategic priorities remains a challenge for the schools.

*The external adviser left the meeting.*

**APQ 25/92** **3.2 Any other business**  
There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 4.00pm

Signed:.....*Tim Duffen*..... Date:....5<sup>th</sup> February 2026.....