

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on Thursday 27th March 2025

GOVERNORS

PRESENT:

Ben Owen, Chair (from 17:30)
Jane Peacock, Vice Chair (meeting chair until 17:30)
Andrew Cropley, Principal and Chief Executive Officer
Joanna Poon
Keith Spiers (until 17:40)
Scott Smith, Staff Governor (Academic)
Andrew Spencer, Staff Governor (Business Support) (until 18:45)

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE:

Diane Booth, Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience
Arina Borscakova, Student Governor
Ella Brookes, Assistant Principal: Inclusion
Jane Fishwick, Assistant Principal: Academic, Creative, Community, Digital and Professional Studies
Sarah Morley, Assistant Principal: Quality and Standards (from 17:15)
Nikki Slack, Assistant Principal: Health, Education and Service Industries
Kirsty Walsh, Assistant Principal: Engineering (from 18:25)
Eloise Hopkinson, Head of Governance
Nic Williamson, Head of Department: English, Maths and Functional Skills
Joanna Wilson, Head of Mansfield and Ashfield Sixth Form Centre

- | | | ACTION
by whom | DATE
by when |
|----------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | <u>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>
Apologies for absence were received from Kit Salt. Keith Spiers indicated that he would need to leave the meeting at around 17:30. | | |
| 2 | <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u>
The chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on agenda items to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted. | | |
| 3 | <u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23RD JANUARY 2025</u>
The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions. | | |

Signed: _____ Chair



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AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2025.

There were no matters arising.

4 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The committee members were happy to note the content of the update provided.

5 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN (QIAP) 2024/25 PROGRESS UPDATE

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented her detailed report, particularly drawing the committee's attention to the following key points:

Attendance

- Attendance was 84.92% overall, which was 0.77% worse than reported in January. The vice principal reminded governors that the college has an inclusive curriculum, with Mansfield Education Hub, Boost, Engage, and some lower-level students studying carpentry and joinery, plastering, and bricklaying at the Old Brewery. Many of these may have been in alternative provision or, if they were in school, in a unit for young people with barriers to learning. These are the hardest to reach young people, and lots of work is being done to keep them engaged and retain them in education.
- Attendance within English and maths continued to be a challenge. English attendance had declined by 0.25% to 80.25%, and maths had declined by 0.65% to 78.95%. The vice principal explained that the interim report emerging from the Curriculum and Assessment Review stated that, nationally, attendance in maths and English is 9% lower than vocational attendance. The college's English attendance is around 6% lower than vocational, and maths attendance is around 7% lower. Therefore, while the college's data was not where leaders would want it to be, it could be evidenced that it was slightly better than the national average against vocational. A lot was in place to encourage learners to attend maths and English lessons, including the sending of text messages at specific points. The most text messages were sent on 10th March, and attendance increased by 2.34% as a result. Messages are also being sent to reward those with over 90% attendance and those who have improved their attendance over a short period of time. Positive feedback has been received – learners in Engineering were particularly happy to have received these positive messages.
- Apprentices' attendance was 89.41%, which was 0.28% lower than reported to the committee in January.

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One governor questioned whether the fact that attendance has dipped across all areas is a seasonal decrease and so usual for this time of year. The vice principal indicated that attendance in the first term is usually higher and then this does tend to decrease. She explained that there will also be some impact of some learners having chosen to leave site after sitting their mocks. Although the greatest impact is among those young people who have particularly low attendance, there is still evidence that many of these have improved since they were at school. Nonetheless, it was recognised that the college needs to do more, and governors were assured that efforts continue. However, it was explained that having a more inclusive and bespoke curriculum than was in place pre-pandemic will unavoidably be to the detriment of attendance data, and this will only increase. One governor agreed that it was necessary to look at the broader picture and, if it could be evidenced that some learners' attendance had improved since school, this would be ideal.

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience was asked whether the college had access to any data which would enable a comparison between attendance rates at school and college, in order to be able to see the distance travelled. The vice principal advised that details relating to attendance are sometimes received along with the transition information for individual students, but this is rare. Some students have also alleged that their former schools told them to omit certain information, particularly where there is a concern that this could impact on their ability to progress to college.

The meeting chair suggested that it would be great if the college could provide some harder evidence to support the claims around those students with lower attendance being the harder to reach or formerly NEET individuals who have improved since they were at school, even if it were not possible to access 100% of the data needed. The vice principal indicated that she would look into whether it would be possible to present separate data for those newer and more inclusive programmes – such as Mansfield Education Hub, Boost and Engage – and compare it to those courses which were already in place before the college introduced these.

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience indicated that she has spoken to the head of department in construction and, next year, there will be 1:1s with all Old Brewery students to obtain details of their educational history. Transition processes with those coming from alternative provision are quite well organised, but difficulties emerge in respect of young people who were not in alternative provision or electively home educated but spent a significant amount of their school career in isolation or in a special unit. Knowing which young people had their schooling impacted in this way would allow the college to have a better picture and to track these students. If this

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model works, the college may be able to introduce initial 1:1s for all students across Level 1 provision.

Apprenticeships

- The national rate for apprenticeships has increased by 6.2% to 60.5%, but the college was already working to this percentage.
- Retention was 76.8% at the date of the meeting.
- The achievement of high grades since 1st August 2024 had increased to 39.4%, which was a 3.3% increase since the previous committee meeting.
- The pass rate for endpoint assessments since 1st August 2024 was 97.3%.
- There had been an in-year Accountability Framework update at R06. The college was still flagging in two areas, but retention had improved by 1.7% and achievement by 0.23%. The college had improved from 'needs improvement' to 'on track' in relation to employer feedback.
- Robust monitoring continues. Governors were informed that, historically, retention has slipped from May onwards, but the vice principal and principal were confident that that this most of this year's predictions are more accurate and that the college is in a strong position. The principal indicated that forward-looking MIS data has allowed heads of department to get on top of this and give it relentless focus, enabling targets to be met within the promised timeframes. There were still some risks around endpoint assessment timeliness, but this was sometimes not something which the college could control. Staff and managers were aware of the challenges, and the Executive team offered help and support where needed.
- The number of apprentices beyond 90 days past their end date remained at 58, which was the same as was reported to the previous committee meeting. However, in comparison to March 2024, this was a reduction of 32. The vice principal assured governors that assistant principals and heads of department were working hard together to ensure that the number of apprentices past their end date continued to decrease and that the reviews remained regular and timely.

The meeting chair indicated that, when the dashboard is presented at future meetings, it would be useful if it could show the benchmarks set by the Department for Education to enable governors to see how far within the 'safety' zone the college is (or how much improvement is needed to reach it).

The vice principal indicated that the prediction was that the college would have 61% achievement and would be 'on track' for retention, but that these would not change within the accountability dashboard until

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R14 2024/25. She assured governors that teams were working hard to and concentrating their efforts on driving improvement.

AGREED: to note the content of the report and the updates provided.

6 **CURRICULUM UPDATES**

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented a detailed update relating to several matters.

GCSE mock exam grades

- The JCQ-regulated mock exams took place during week commencing 3rd February.
- There were so many students sitting the mock exams that the college had to use an external venue for the first time. This was more successful than had been anticipated, although necessary improvements have been identified for the summer exams.
- There were 1,435 entries for GCSE English and 1,388 for GCSE Maths. This was a significant increase of 541 entries compared to last year.
- Standardisation and mark scheme training were put in place to prepare teachers for marking the papers.
- Attendance levels for the mock exams were better than in-class attendance percentages, but attendance declined from paper 1 to paper 2 in both subjects. Attendance was 87.4% for GCSE Maths paper 1 and 83.6% for paper 2. GCSE English paper 1 had 86.2% attendance and paper 2 had 82.6%.
- Following the mock exams, the residual score for GCSE English was -1.57 (with 29 missing grades), which was nearly a third of a grade worse than at the same point last year. The residual score for GCSE Maths was -1.03 (with 61 missing grades), which was very similar to the score at the same point last year. The progress score for English was of particular concern.
- Based upon outcomes, all teachers are adapting lessons according to their groups' performance, working on revision and improving answers. This will be monitored through a series of learning walks. All students have the opportunity to attend extra maths and English lessons outside of their normal timetable. Heads of departments have been sent the results and the timetables of the extra sessions, as well as the names of those students who are being targeted, to enable vocational and English and maths teams to work together on driving improvement. A full timetable of revision sessions had been planned for students between Easter and May half term.
- The text message approach will continue in order to strive to improve attendance, and a number of competitions had been devised and put in place to motivate and encourage students.

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The meeting chair indicated that the standardisation work which had taken place with teachers was particularly positive. She asked how valuable the mock exams were, given how much time and effort have gone into to organising them. The vice principal feels that they were incredibly valuable, and she acknowledged the work carried out by the English and maths teams and the support from other staff, such as A-Level and Functional Skills teachers in respect of marking the papers. She informed the committee that the college did not have to employ any external services this year to help. Experiencing the mock exams has given students confidence and enabled them to see what it is like to attend a different campus, as well as giving them a feel for sitting an exam. This has also given staff the opportunity to identify Normal Ways of Working and access arrangements requirements and to make adjustments where needed in time for the actual exams in the summer.

One governor raised a challenge in respect of there having been a significant drop in the English GCSE mock grades. She questioned whether non-attendance in class and the need to attend extra sessions are addressed directly with parents or caregivers where appropriate. She questioned whether anything else could be done to support improvements. In response, the vice principal indicated that the head of English and maths sent emails to parents to inform them of the extra sessions. Text messages were also sent, and the extra sessions have been advertised in all classes. The English and maths teams are now working with vocational staff to target learners and encourage them to attend. She indicated that staff have also met with learners on a 1:1 basis and spoken to them and their parents at parents' evenings. One thing discussed in the curriculum and quality meeting, where this issue is a key focus, was that some lower-level learners only try to answer a certain number of questions and then tend to lose momentum as the paper becomes more difficult. In many cases, the college can evidence that the learner would have achieved a higher grade if they had only answered more questions. Assistant principals and heads of department will work together to maximise support and drive attendance at the extra lessons and revision sessions.

One governor asked whether any trends or themes had been identified from the exam results and, if so, what these were and what specific target measures could help students to improve. The vice principal indicated that areas of weakness varied considerably, which was why teachers were now tailoring their lessons to each individual group to focus on skills gaps, rather than adhering to the scheme of learning.

Outcomes from the Department for Education's apprenticeship training

- This was part of the strategic focus to improve retention, achievement, and timely completion nationally.
- 35 staff members attended a maths and English workshop; 31 attended a workshop with a focus on reviews.

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- They looked at why a college should build a positive culture and how to do this; how to still promote maths and English where adult learners are opting out (following the recent changes for 19+ students); and how to deliver high quality progress reviews.
- Feedback was largely positive – the training was inciteful and provided opportunities for staff to share best practice and expand and/or refresh their knowledge.
- The impact will be measured through non-graded observations and deep dives.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

(Ben Owen joined the meeting and took the role of chair at 17:30.)

(Keith Spiers left the meeting at 17:40.)

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CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT REVIEW INTERIM REPORT

The vice principal: curriculum and quality provided a verbal update in respect of the Curriculum and Assessment Review interim report, which had been uploaded as part of the committee pack and had also been shared with all governors.

The review covers primary, secondary and 16+ education, and the following key points were brought to governors' attention from the report:

- Assessment is working well within GCSEs, T Levels, and some technical qualifications.
- The next focus will be on which systems are not working for SEND learners.
- The curriculum needs to respond to social and technological changes such as the rise in artificial intelligence, media literacy, critical thinking, and digital skills.
- A Levels provide successful preparation for three-year degrees, but the review will now look at how smaller qualifications and technical/applied general qualifications can be taken together will A Levels.
- T Levels provide a high-quality technical route and are 'gold star' qualifications. They are expected to grow. Changes were that building services was moving awarding organisations to EAL and health and science would move from NCFE to Pearsons. Moving forward, T Levels in health and science will be combined into one offer with more pathways, and the decision had been made that there would be no T Levels in either beauty or catering.
- There is a need for alternative Level 3 routes as T Levels are not appropriate for all learners due to their high entry requirements, and many learners are not confident about their career destinations.

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- There will still be a need for technical qualifications, and it is important to have good progression to Level 3.
- It was positive to note that there will be alternatives available, but it will be necessary to await the full outcome of the review – this should be available in autumn 2025.
- For those who did not secure a strong Level 2 at school, there will be more support and strong occupational routes.
- The interim report discusses T-Level foundation programmes and the flexibility these provide.
- There is more work to be done with parents and carers to increase understanding, as the qualifications can differ between providers.
- Level 1 and Entry Level make up only a small number of learners studying nationally, but these levels tend to include higher numbers of learners with SEND and in receipt of free college meals.
- Achieving a grade 4 in GCSE Maths and English has a significant positive impact on adult life, but a lot of learners are not at this level. The report talks about how providers can help learners who will not achieve this by 19 to still celebrate success. It acknowledges that having to resit their exams multiple times is not good for young people, and it is important to look at what can be done to help with this.
- The review will look at how the strengths of young people within the curriculum can be captured with the right balance of assessment methods, while retaining the importance of exams. There was not an indicator that there would be much change in GCSEs, A Levels and T levels, but the aim is to look at how other assessment can be more flexible. The current system takes into account teaching to the test, teacher workload, and potential bias, so there will be a lot of work to do.
- The review will look at T-Level content as well as assessment methods and industry placements, but with a focus on not taking away the quality.

A staff governor indicated there definitely needs to be more focus in terms of SEND. He also suggested that a move away from exams would be interesting, considering the rising use of artificial intelligence and the part which this plays in coursework.

In general discussion, it was agreed that the decision to retain an alternative offer at Level 3 was a positive thing. Although the college is doing very well with the T Levels offered, these are not suitable for every learner.

The chair reminded governors that they need to provide whatever support they can to the Executive team in relation to this. He indicated that the Education Select Committee is also seeking witnesses on how

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Further Education should be run. There is lots of positivity and an acknowledgement that there should be multiple routes and options for young people, but it will be interesting to see how the balance can be reached between the lack of available funding and the focus on SEND learners. It was agreed that there was a real opportunity for the sector to push through these challenges, particularly with devolution.

AGREED: to note the content of the update.

8

A LEVELS MONITORING

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented her detailed written report, and key matters highlighted were:

- Year 13 attendance was 87.9%, which was very slightly lower than was reported in January (0.2%). This was just below the level to be RAG-rated green.
- Year 12 attendance was 91%, which was very slightly lower than in January but was still RAG-rated green.
- Year 13's residual score at progress check 3 was based on the January mock exam results, and more learning has taken place since then. This was -0.94 against a target of zero (0), which was over half a grade better than at this time last year, when it was -1.57. The changes made to the structure, resulting in a settled team of curriculum area leads and head of sixth form, have clearly allowed more focus.
- Year 12's residual score was -0.95 against a target of zero (0) by the end of their second year (Year 13). At this point, this was not a concern as the learners have another four and half terms of teaching before they take their exams. The vice principal indicated that lots of intervention was taking place.
- The Year 13 ALPS score shows that the average grade is the same as at the previous meeting but with some decline in the number of subjects categorised as red and white. This will be an area of focus but, again, there was lots of intervention in place.
- There were 26 Year 13 students on individualised action plans, and these were being closely monitored. A supportive but challenging approach was in place to improve attendance and encourage learners to work and study hard.
- The Year 12 ALPS score had declined from 5 to 6. Again, there were some attendance and progress concerns with around 20 learners identified as at risk. These were being closely monitored, and meetings had taken place to challenge and support them to get back on track.
- The prediction for the end of year was an average score of 6 (an improvement on last year's 8). The vice principal indicated that there some caution was still being exercised in respect of this score, but the department was heading in the right direction with a greater focus on support, challenge and intervention.

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The chair was pleased to see the progress made in this area, and he extended gratitude to managers for the positivity and for launching the new strategies. He indicated that he recently had a positive meeting at the Chesterfield Road campus and that he was optimistic about the future of the department.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

9 2023/24 ACTUAL DESTINATIONS

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented her report, asking governors to particularly note the following key points:

- 79.2% of students secured positive destinations into employment, apprenticeships, Higher Education, or study at a higher level within the college.
- There was a 4.8% increase in learners progressing to university compared to the previous year.
- The proportion of unknown destinations of leavers was 1.4%, which was a 0.3% increase on the previous year.
- A further 185 learners (5.3%) left to become NEET, which was another slight increase.

One governor observed that the destinations data was still positive, and the chair agreed that this was a barometer showing whether or not the college is doing the right thing. He indicated that the high number of students securing positive destinations could be something to bear in mind in terms of marketing.

10 BALANCED SCORECARD ITEMS AND ANNUAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Ofsted areas for improvement

Strong improvements were reported in on- and off-the-job learning. In digital and media, and retail and management, on- and off-the-job learning continue to be discussed within reviews and are synchronised with learning practices. Some improvements have been made in construction over the last 12 months, and some specialists are planning synchronisation. Engineering, fabrication and welding, and motor vehicle show the greatest improvement in synchronisation. Hair and beauty, and early years, are always good and remain consistent with clear, tangible evidence of synchronisation.

The electrical curriculum is now supported by a stable team, with a mix of qualified teachers and individuals who are fresh from industry. The T Level has launched. Broadly, progress is around the same as it was at this point last year and slightly better than at the 2023/24 yearend. However, this is a difficult technical qualification, so it is still an exam-based course even for those who are not on the T Level. Due to having employed individuals with industry experience who are new to teaching, there is

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still more to do in terms of teaching and learning, but progress is being made. However, the head of department has so much energy and drive to get this right, and he is leading CPD sessions on pedagogy and a progress-based approach. The awarding body visited recently and said that the model in place is good practice.

The setting of demanding work is being monitored through deep dives and good progress is being made. Some areas still require further focus: academic studies, rail engineering, engineering apprenticeships, Access to HE, GCSE Maths, and some subcontracted provision.

Some progress is being made in relation to the effective use of assessment to ensure learners retain knowledge over time, but some areas demonstrate an overreliance on questioning rather than applying other strategies to check learning. However, despite there being more to do, the vice principal was confident that the college was on the right track. All areas for development remain a key focus in departmental QIPS, which are monitored five times per year in performance management reviews. The college maintains a tailored approach to CPD and has invested in HOW2s to allow teachers to work on their individual areas for development. HOW2s are well received and usage continues to improve, and there are champions in place to provide support across the college.

One governor asked what percentage of teaching staff were Fellows of the Higher Education Academy. The response was that very few were FHEA, as the college does not deliver HE. Governors were informed that many of the HE delivery staff moved to NTU as part of the partnership.

The governor queried what the timescale is for new teachers to seek a teaching qualification and whether there is one type of teaching qualification which they are directed to pursue. The vice principal explained that it would depend on the new teacher's career background and skills. It would not necessarily be appropriate to put specific individuals on a Level 4 or 5 qualification immediately, so these would be placed on a shorter pathway initially. The teaching apprenticeship and PGCE Level 4 and 5 each take a couple of years, but this can vary by staff member. However, these staff receive a lot of support through tailored CPD and industry updating, and every effort is made to balance this with their workload and consider their wellbeing.

The vice chair referenced some relevant data from the Quality Improvement Action Plan update, namely that the non-graded observations in the autumn term covered around 93% of teaching staff. She challenged whether the remaining 7% were omitted as a result of turnover or whether there were still some teachers who needed to be observed but had not been yet. The vice principal indicated that leaders try not to observe those members of staff who are undertaking a teacher

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training programme too often. In addition, there are legitimate reasons within the policy for not observing some teachers, such as medical or other personal reasons. Some were missed due to an unexpected absence affecting either the teacher or the staff member undertaking the observation, and sometimes staffing challenges and cover requirements have had an impact. Finally, In respect of apprenticeships delivery staff, it can be very difficult to synchronise diaries and travel. However, this is all being monitored to ensure everyone is observed at some point.

The vice chair also observed that the deep dive feedback shows that accessibility was regularly not met, and she questioned what this means and what the implications are. The vice principal explained that this was a new category for 2024/25, focusing on making sure resources are accessible, and all staff were asked to undergo training. Staff have not been asked to go back and amend their existing resources – this would not be an achievable task – but they must ensure any new resources are accessible. Therefore, more areas are meeting the requirements as time passes. Monitoring this via the deep dives will further drive improvement.

AGREED: to note the content of the report.

11 RISK REPORT (RED RAG-RATED ITEMS) – REVIEW OF RISKS WITH STANDARDS COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT

The vice principal: curriculum and quality presented the report, providing an update against the red risks that were not covered elsewhere within the reports already presented.

Hard-to-fill vacancies

- One vacancy was remaining at the time of the meeting: air conditioning and refrigeration. However, governors were informed that WNC was further ahead than other colleges as it was actually offering and delivering the air conditioning and refrigeration course. That being said, recruiting staff has been a challenge and several appointments were lost. There was another potential recruit in the pipeline, but it was too soon to confirm this. As at the date of the meeting, there were 42 apprentices on the waiting list, but the college has been creative in terms of offering block release. This was described as a large growth area, with many students coming from further afield as colleges closer to them do not offer this course at all.
- A vacancy for a plumbing teacher was also proving hard to fill, along with a sessional beauty role. In comparison to previous years, however, this was agreed to be a definite improvement.

Functional skills

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- The maths residual score at progress check 4 was -0.84 (with 48 missing grades), which was two tenths of a grade worse than at the same point last year.
- The residual score for English at progress check 4 was -0.51 (with 21 missing grades), which was almost one third of a grade worse than at the same point last year.
- As these are on-demand qualifications, the progress check for both English and maths was either an actual exam or a mock paper.
- Interventions had been put in place and staff were working together to offer 'Functional Skills Extra' lessons and ensure learners were ready to take their exams.
- As there are no fixed exam points, students have longer to study and prepare.

The committee chair agreed that air conditioning vacancies continue to be very difficult to fill, and he indicated that it was positive to see that the college was being creative in finding ways around this challenge.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

12 **PERFORMANCE REPORT – DATA ON A PAGE**

The assistant principal: quality and standards introduced this item, particularly drawing the committee's attention to the following data:

Education programmes for young people

- Attendance (83.9%) is 1.3% below where it was at the previous committee meeting (January 2025) and 0.6% below the position reported in March 2024.
- Retention (93%) is 3.6% below the position in January 2025 but is still 1.8% above the 2023/24 position. It is 4.1% above the national average.
- The progress score (-0.85) has declined since the January 2025 meeting and is less positive (-0.09) than in March 2024.
- Vocational attendance (85.7%) is 1.2% below the figure reported in January 2025 and 0.2% lower than in March 2024.
- The vocational progress score is -0.43, which is an improvement compared to March 2024 and the same as in January 2025.
- English attendance (79%) is 0.8% below January 2025 but 1.1% above March 2024.
- The English progress score is -1.62, which is a decline on the position reported in both January 2025 and March 2024.
- Maths attendance (78%) is 1.6% below January 2025 and 0.9% below March 2024.
- The maths progress score is -1.05, which is a decline compared to both January 2025 and March 2024.

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Adult learning programmes

- Direct delivery attendance (87.3%) is 1.3% above the position reported at January's meeting and 2.5% above the position in March 2024.
- Direct delivery retention (89.7%) is 5.3% below the position reported at January's committee meeting and 4.6% below March 2024. This is now lower than the national average of 92.2%.
- The direct delivery progress score, at -0.10, has declined slightly since January 2025 and is also slightly worse than the position in March 2024.
- Subcontracted delivery retention (94.7%) is 2.5% higher than was reported to January's committee meeting (and the national average) and 0.3% above March 2024's position. Achievement (70.2%) is 0.6% below the position reported to the committee in January 2025. This is 3.5% below March 2024 and 16.6% below the national average.
- Community delivery retention (88.7%) is 1.3% below the same point in 2023/24 and 3.5% below the national average. It has reduced by 5.3% since January 2025. Achievement (79.4%) is 6.6% below the percentage reported to the last committee meeting, 12.7% above the position in March 2024, and 7.4% below the national average.

Apprenticeships – direct delivery

- Attendance (89.6%) is 0.4% below the position reported in January 2025 and 1.5% above March 2024's figure.
- Retention (76.6%) is 1.7% below the position in January 2025 but 8.3% above that reported in March 2024.
- Achievement (34.8%) is 10.6% above January 2025 and 23.5% above March 2024. Although this is still 19.8% below the national average, this will rise as the academic year progresses.
- Recording of 20% off-the-job training (23.3%) shows a 0.7% decline compared to January 2025 and a 3.7% improvement on the position in March 2024.
- Recording of six hours of off-the job training (7.7%) shows an improvement of 0.8% since the previous committee meeting and is 7.7% better than in March 2024.
- Reviews in the last three months (90.4%) is 3.8% above the position in January 2025 and 7% above March 2024.

Learners with high needs

- Overall attendance is 85.3%, which is 0.6% below the figure in January 2025 and 0.5% below the figure reported in March 2024. Retention is 94.8%, which is 2.6% below the position reported in January 2025 and 3.2% below March 2024. The progress score is -0.83, which is a decline since both the last committee meeting and March 2024.

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- Vocational attendance is 86.6%, which is 0.5% below the position reported in January 2025 and 0.4% above the position in March 2024. The vocational progress score is -0.30, which shows an improvement since the last committee meeting and is the same as in March 2024.
- English attendance is 82.6%, which is 0.7% below the position in January 2025 and 3.6% below March 2024. The English progress score is -1.40, which shows a decline on the position both at the previous committee meeting and at this same point in 2024.
- Maths attendance is 83.1%, which is 0.6% below the position in January 2025 and 0.5% below March 2024. The maths progress score is -1.01, which is a decline compared to both January 2025 and March 2024.

Free school meals

- Attendance (81.6%) is 1.3% below the position in January 2025 and 0.5% below March 2024.
- Retention (93.4%) is 3.8% below the position reported in January 2025 and 1.2% below March 2024.
- The progress score is -0.89, which is a decline since both January 2025 and March 2024.

BAME

- Attendance (87 %) is 0.1% above January 2025 and 1.7% above March 2024.
- Retention (91.4%) is 5.5% below the position in January 2025 and 4.2% below March 2024.
- The progress score is -0.67, which is a decline since both the previous meeting and the position at this same point in 2024.

Deep dives meeting expectations (percentage grade 2 or better)

- Deep dives of classroom-based learning show that 68.4% (13 out of 19) achieved grade 2 or better.
- Deep dives of apprenticeships show that 75% (three of four deep dives carried out) achieved grade 2 or better.
- One deep dive was carried out of the sixth form, but this did not score a grade 2 or higher.
- Two of three cross-college deep dives scored grade 2 or better (66.7%). Therefore, overall, 66.7% of deep dives of college direct delivery have scored a grade 2 or better (18 out of 27).
- One deep dive had been conducted of a subcontractor, but this did not reach grade 2 or higher.
- At the date of the meeting, no deep dives of community delivery had yet been carried out.

Particularly looking at the retention for learners with high needs and the dip in BAME data, the chair asked whether any themes were emerging.

Signed:  _____ Chair

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The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience indicated that the latter dip was in relation to part-time adult learners within the online Skills Academy provision. Furthermore, she explained that the college has had to remove two or three high needs students this year as part of disciplinary sanctions following behavioural issues, which is higher than in previous years. The chair suggested that it would be helpful, in future, to split out adult learners and 16-18s within the BAME data.

AP: Q&S /
VP: C&Q

June 2025

The vice chair indicated that seeing all the red markers within the data sheet causes concern initially, but closer scrutiny shows that these are tiny margins. She advised that it is important for governors to be able to extract the genuine concerns, rather than focusing solely on everything that is highlighted in red. She suggested that introducing a tolerance margin on the red markers would improve the readability of the data. It was agreed that, in light of the college's increasing inclusivity, the fact that the data shows only marginal reduction is positive.

AP: Q&S /
VP: C&Q

June 2025

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

COMMUNITY PLEDGE IN-YEAR UPDATE 2024/25

A brief report on progress made was presented, and governors were invited to challenge and question the Executive attendees.

The principal informed governors that, at a recent event, a member of his professional network gave some very complimentary feedback in respect of the Community Pledge.

The vice chair observed that documents such as this can sometimes be too grandiose and fail to work well, and she stated that it was impressive to see that the college's pledge is working and progress is being made. Overall, governors agreed that it was a very positive update which puts the college in a good position and really evidences its ability to meet the needs of the community.

Governors were informed that the Community Pledge would go to the Corporation Board in May 2025 for approval as the college's accountability statement.

AGREED: to note the content of the update.

14

2024/25 IN-YEAR EXCEPTIONS REPORTS

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her detailed combined report.

Safeguarding and Prevent

- The Safeguarding team continues to be exceedingly busy, having received almost 700 more referrals through CPOMS than at this

Signed: _____ Chair



Date: 01/07/2025

point last year. This has been due to both increased student numbers and the increased complexity of needs.

- A previous concern which had gone through the Channel panel but was not taken forward for intervention has been passed back to the college. The college is now working with the emerging threats and early help team in Nottinghamshire County Council to secure some support for this young person.
- Team members have attended two child death reviews this year, both relating to relatives of students. As a result of investigations, one young person is open to a child protection plan.
- 10 concerns have been received relating to child sexual exploitation, and nine relating to county lines/criminal exploitation.
- The largest number of concerns related to mental health and wellbeing, and the college has supported 25 students who have made an attempt on life this year.
- The college has only received four safeguarding concerns from subcontracted provision, all from the Inspire & Achieve Foundation.
- 93 concerns have been received in relation to bullying, these are yet to be separated into which of these are actually instances of bullying and which relate to peer relationship issues. One student has been excluded for bullying.
- To address issues with peer relationship and low-level bullying, a company called Loud Speaker delivered sessions to study programme students. Feedback was very positive. The college also contracted Jody Seaton to deliver some targeted sessions in those areas where the most issues were seen. These two interventions have had a small impact on concerns, with only five received in March compared to 12 in January. However, it will be necessary to wait until the end of the year to really see the impact.
- The recent counter-terrorism local profile update resulted in no changes to the college's safeguarding and Prevent risk assessment. The biggest threat factor remains online activity.
- Lockdown practices will take place at Derby Road, Chesterfield Road and the Mansfield Education Hub in late April and early May. The intention is to have had one of these at every campus by the end of the academic year.
- A national review of Prevent thresholds is currently underway, and this may involve the introduction of a new category which involves a fascination with extreme violence without necessarily having an ideology.
- As part of the relational schools pilot, the college has signed up to become an Attachment Research Community (ARC) college. This will connect the college to other providers and provide

Signed: _____



_____ Chair

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access to some beneficial resources. This is already working very well already in Health and Social Care and has also been adopted at the Old Brewery. This will possibly be rolled out into the Hair and Beauty department, among others.

The chair indicated that the number of referrals is a concern, particularly in reference to the staff workload.

In response to a question from the vice chair, the vice principal indicated that the Safeguarding team is resilient and continues to cope well with the increasing student numbers. However, the Executive team has discussed that it may be necessary to expand the Safeguarding team. The team receives regular supervision sessions, and the vice principal and safeguarding manager have also been carrying some concerns within their caseloads. Some challenges have emerged in relation to having a consistent presence on some other campuses – at the moment, the demand at Derby Road is not allowing this.

The vice chair indicated that she would expect an increased demand as a result of higher student numbers, but she reminded the committee of past discussions surrounding the importance of building resilience, particularly in reference to anxiety and lower-level mental health issues. She asked how much proactive work was being done and whether this could result in a reduction in referrals. The vice principal indicated that the college is providing proactive self-help sessions for groups of students, equipping them with strategies to build their own resilience and manage their own mental health. However, she informed the committee that the college has had to close its internal counselling service to further referrals, as the significant waiting list in place would have taken these past the end of the academic year. GPs tend to refer young people back into the college for counselling, which exacerbates this demand.

The chair expressed concern to hear that the vice principal has had to take on some safeguarding cases on top of her own workload. He specifically recommended that the board and Executive should give the highest priority to the employment of an additional Safeguarding team member. He indicated that this was vital to ensure the college could continue providing an acceptable level of support in the face of ongoing demographic growth. The principal gave assurance that the process of arranging this additional role is underway. The college will receive funding linked to its work in priority sectors and the disadvantaged uplift, and the finance director is currently working with his team to see what the pay offer can be and which new posts must take priority, with the agreement that bolstering the Safeguarding team is at the top of the list. Further student growth is expected next year, but the assumption is that there will be no in-year growth funding. This will be a challenge for every college in the country. Care needs to be taken in respect of investing in

June 2025

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additional posts, but it is vital to ensure the college can uphold its quality of service. It was agreed that an update on this issue would be presented at the next Standards Committee meeting.

VP: CESE /
Principal

(Andrew Spencer left the meeting at 18:45.)

Equality, diversity and inclusion

- The committee members were informed that a proposal will go to the board in May in relation to the Association of Colleges Mental Health Charter. If endorsed, signing this will provide a number of resources for both staff and students.
- The college has signed up to the FE Colleges of Sanctuary, which is a public commitment to support asylum seekers and refugees.
- A small audit is being carried out of the Rainbow Flag so that the college can be reaccredited for another three years.

Priority data

- The college continues to see a significant drop in attendance for young people in supported housing, but their progress scores are better than college averages. The college is engaged in a project with social care, supported housing providers, and the Virtual School to explore what can be done to engage these young people in learning. Actions in place to reverse this trend include evening drop-in sessions with college staff at My Space in Mansfield to build relationships; college support staff starting their working day at the YMCA to help young people get up and into college; a wider project to deliver some sessions at the YMCA for young people who are NEET; and CPD for staff within these settings to better understand what education can offer.
- Actual destinations were described as a 'mixed bag' – good progress has been made in closing the gap for care experienced young people who are NEET and young people who are closed to a child in need plan, and the proportion securing positive destinations is now almost in line with the college average. However, more high needs young people and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan are NEET. Analysis of the data shows that, of the 13 declared as NEET, four were offered a progression opportunity within the college but chose not to take this.

The chair was happy to note the updates in relation to the FE Colleges of Sanctuary and the mental health charter proposal. While acknowledging that destinations data was indeed mixed, he was assured to see that there has still been good progress in some categories.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided

15

LEARNER VOICE – 2024/25 MONITORING

Signed: _____



_____ Chair

Date: 01/07/2025

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her report.

- Just over 1,700 responded to January's Rate Your Course survey, which was considered a very positive response rate.
- 92.2% indicated that they learned a lot or some new things.
- 91.3% would recommend the college to others.
- The results were broken down by directorate at the appendix. The response rate from the sixth form centre was noted to be of concern as only seven students took part in the survey. The vice principal indicated that this would be explored prior to the next iteration of the survey.
- The Your Voice meeting held in early March included a presentation from a Mansfield Place Board representative in relation to the new Mansfield brand, which received a very positive response from most students. There was also an update in relation to the college's creative writing competition for students, and one person stepped forward as a judge. A general summary of outcomes and actions from the meeting was presented to governors as part of the report, and it was agreed that the minutes would be circulated to the committee once available.

VP: CESE /
Head of
Gov.

April 2025

Referring to one area of feedback linked to T-Level placements, the academic staff governor asked whether governors could do anything via their networks to support the college with placements and ensure there were options available for students. The vice principal: curriculum and quality assured the committee that the head of department for computer science was attending all employer board meetings to push for digital placements within other sectors. The principal indicated that IT placements are hard as many IT teams work completely from home. It was also communicated that the college was already engaging with other colleges to partner up and offer placements to each other's students. The vice principal has also highlighted concerns with digital placements in the return to the Department for Education.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

16 COMPLAINTS – 2024/25 MID-YEAR REPORT

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her brief report. 33 complaints had been received in 2024/25, at the mid-year point. A number of the complaints raised in relation to teaching and learning related to students not having been accepted onto their preferred course. Although none related to the quality of teaching and learning, a few did relate to the attitude of teaching staff towards students.

All complaints had been resolved by the college, with none escalated to either Ofsted or the ESFA. The vice principal explained that one ongoing

Signed: _____  _____ Chair

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complaint was currently with the awarding body and was yet to be resolved.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17 **ENGAGEMENT IN-YEAR UPDATES/HALF-YEARLY REPORTS**

The vice principal: communications, engagement and student experience presented her summary of the engagement activity in progress., highlighting the following key points:

- Progress against the employer engagement milestones showed that the college was making good headway. However, following some feedback received at the recent strategy day, the vice principal and colleagues intended to review the employer engagement strategy. The key message emerging was about how the college could better serve the local SME sector.
- The vice principal was due to meet with the board's new special advisor for employer engagement, along with the college's head of employer engagement. She indicated that one of his first tasks would be to pull together a meeting with all advisory panel chairs.
- Progress against the parental engagement action plan was also presented to the committee. This included an example of one area's first newsletter to parents, plus details of how many parents had opened the newsletter.
- The Matrix reaccreditation was very positive, focusing on the college's range of careers support, its relationship with employers, and how careers is arranged across the college and not simply as a bolt-on service. Feedback from students was positive. The only recommendation was resourcing to extend this further, including staff.
- Following the success of the bus trip to NTU, the careers manager took a second trip to Sheffield Hallam University. This was equally successful and received very good feedback. The vice principal expected that this would become a regular feature, based on its success and popularity.

The vice chair agreed that it was very positive to see the parent and carer engagement plan, and she questioned whether this has brought benefits. The vice principal indicated that it was too early to tell. However, she assured the committee that engagement with parents' events was improving, both in terms of attendance and the richness of parents' questioning. The parent newsletters are also being used as an opportunity to sell adult courses.

Governors agreed that the newsletter for parents was a very positive development.

AGREED: to note the content of the update.

Signed: _____



_____ Chair

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18 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of additional business.

19 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

This was confirmed to be Tuesday 17th June 2025 at 17:00.

Meeting closed at 19:00.

Signed: _____  _____ Chair

Date: 01/07/2025