

Minutes

SEG Standards Committee Meeting

Governor Meetings

Date	16/09/2025
Time	15:00 - 17:15
Location	Microsoft Teams
Governors Present	Michelle Brabner - Principal – (Ex-Officio Member) Kevin Burke (Independent Member) Roderic Gillespie (Committee Chair - Independent Member) (from item 8) Anita Holt (Associate Member) Kashfa Kalim (Independent Member) (up to and including item 8.3) Susannah Porter (Independent Member) Elaine Small (Independent Member) Tracey Wood (Independent Member) (voted in as Committee Vice Chair 25/26 under item 3)
Invited Attendees	Rachael Brownhill (Assistant Principal Learner Development and Careers) Teresa Catterall (Assistant Principal Planning and Projects) Lisa Farnhill (Dir. Governance and Compliance) Vickie Hayes (Director of Student Support and Inclusion) Shaun Hindle (Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and External Relations) Stephen Musa (Deputy Principal) Jane Rowley (Assistant Principal Curriculum & Quality)
Apologies	
Absent	Luke Collier (Student Governor)

Agenda

1 - Welcome and apologies for absence

The meeting commenced with the Director of Governance & Compliance advising the Committee Chair, was in another meeting and would be arriving as soon as possible, asking the 2024/2025 Committee Vice Chair to step in with the opening of the meeting.

Members noted there had not been any apologies for absence, however, one member needed to leave at 4pm.

The 2024/2025 Committee Vice Chair highlighted the presence of a number of members of staff that had not previously attended governor meetings, asking for brief introductions. Members expressed regret that their first meeting was held online, thanking them for their time and papers. Members highlighted how the presence of more staff delivering papers aligned with their commitment to improving governance through hearing from more voices to improve transparency and staff governor interactions.

The Dir. Governance and Compliance confirmed the Student Governor had indicated they would be at the meeting and would attend in the office of the Dir. of Student Support and Inclusion, as student governor mentor. The Dir. Student confirmed she had received confirmation from the student governor that they would attend with them in their office. Members agreed that should they not arrive later, this needed to be marked as absent.

Item 1: Noted

2 - Declaration of interests

The Committee Vice Chair asked if there were any declarations of interest relevant to the agenda items. No conflicts of interest relating to items on the agenda were declared by members or attendees.

Item 2: Noted

3 - Appointment of a Committee Vice Chair

The Director of Governance & Compliance opened the floor for nominations for the position of Committee Vice Chair, noting that Kash Kalim had served in this role for the last two academic years. It was noted that no one had expressed interest prior to the meeting, however, Tracey Wood volunteered to take over the role if Kash wished to step down. Kash agreed, and the committee confirmed that Tracey Wood would take over as Vice Chair starting from the 2025/26 academic year, however, Kash agreed to continue chairing the present meeting until the arrival of the Committee Chair.

Item 3: Approved: The Committee approved the appointment of Tracey Wood as Committee Vice Chair for 2025/2026

4 - Minutes and matters arising

The Director of Governance and Compliance confirmed that the minutes from the previous meeting had been circulated. She asked if there were any alterations or matters arising that had not been captured under item 5. No changes were requested, and the minutes were approved.

Item 4 Approved: The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2025.

5 - Actions summary

The Director of Governance and Compliance outlined the progress against actions arising from the previous meeting. It was noted that actions relating to corporation approval, had all been actioned. The Director of Governance and Compliance provided a summary of progress in improving the process for approving policies, including a return to using links to the Teams folder rather than attaching extensive documents to board packs, and increasing the delegated authority of committees where appropriate. Members endorsed the change which aimed to reduce the volume of paperwork and make the approval process more manageable, allowing the Corporation meetings to remain strategic. Members agreed this would ensure that those with relevant expertise are making informed decisions on policies related to their committees, maintaining Corporation approval where needed.

Item 5 Approved: The Committee approved the impact statements from the meeting held on 17th June 2025.

6 - Confidential items

The acting Committee Chair asked if there were any confidential items to be discussed. The Director of Governance & Compliance confirmed that there were no confidential items flagged in the minutes or within the agenda for this meeting, however, any discussions relating to performance that may identify individuals may need to be redacted.

Item 6 Noted

7 - Changes to Risks Related to Standards

The Deputy Principal provided an update on changes to the risk register related to standards. He reported that the senior team had recommended the removal of risk S3, which was related to Ofsted monitoring visits. Members agreed this was no longer relevant, with the monitoring visit having concluded, and the College now being in scope for an inspection under the new framework. Members agreed that under the meeting reflection item, they should discuss and consider replacing S3 with a more appropriate risk, related to preparing for an inspection under the new Ofsted framework. Members agreed this proposal would be revisited under item 17.

Item 7 Resolved: The Committee resolved to endorse the decision to remove risk S3.

8 - Quality of Education Report Including Outcomes And Targets

Item 8.1 KPI's and 8.2, Enrolment

The Deputy Principal presented the scorecard and provided an overview of achievement rates, enrolment, and retention. The committee discussed challenges in A Level recruitment and achievement, noting a need for further analysis of the conversion data. Assurances were provided over analysis to date, with strong application data, and time taken to understand the reasons for lower enrolment, and impact of local competition, with members discussing regional variations in student numbers. Initiatives such as the A Level Foundation Programme and enhanced marketing were outlined, along with details of retention strategies. Members commended the proactive, balanced approach.

Whilst acknowledging aspects beyond the control of staff, members challenged areas where targets had not been met. In asking for an explanation and assurances regarding lesson observations, members sought to understand any correlation between the failure to achieve observation targets, attendance and outcomes. The Committee was assured by the risk-based approach taken to prioritising lesson observations, and actions to evolve and improve the process for the next academic year.

Members asked about the link between the quality cycle presented in 24/25 and implementation of the actions. Members were advised of updates to the approaches, including evidence informed practice embedded into the new teaching and learning strategy, to be presented under item 10. Members noted this had renewed focus on implementation, visibility and accountability, with members commending the streamlined approach.

The Deputy Principal asked the Committee to support a review of the targets set for 2025/26. It was agreed this should be followed up in early October, at a short online meeting of the Committee, ahead of the Corporation meeting, to ensure timely approval. Members asked for the paper to include trend data for the last three years, to provide context and support their understanding and approval.

Item 8.3: Outcomes – Southport College

The Assistant Principal Planning and Projects, presented the outcomes data for Southport College. Members noted an overall achievement rate of 81.2%, approximately 3% lower than the previous year, with no significant achievement gaps between different learner groups. Key strengths included 100% pass rates in a number of subjects, and strong T level results, with this being a positive variation against national trends. Success stories included students progressing to elite training and winning awards in floristry. Areas for improvement were identified in construction and applied general subjects like art and design, with initiatives in place to address these.

Initiatives to drive up outcomes, underpinned by high expectations around behaviour and attendance were outlined, which included the appointment of an English and maths manager and the introduction of mobile phone safes in English and maths classrooms to reduce distractions, as well as support from senior staff in driving up attendance to lessons.

Members discussed achievement rates, asking about predicted achievement rates. The Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality explained the challenges with lower-level courses and staffing issues, now addressed with strengthened leadership.

Members asked if the successes had been analysed for transferable best practice. Members discussed the elements contributing to success, including the induction process, employer engagement activities and effective placement management, as well as considering the benefits of staff training, with appropriate resource allocation. The enthusiasm for the new curriculum and external assessments also contributed to the positive outcomes.

Item 8.4: Outcomes - KGV

The Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality provided the Committee with an overview of the outcomes data for the KGV Campus, noting improvements in high grades and narrowing achievement gaps in humanities and social sciences, with issues in science subjects and drama discussed at length. The impact of work done to narrow gaps and improve achievement, including increasing the number of high grades, was outlined, with an acknowledgement that more needed to be done, with inaccuracies in predication highlighted.

Members noted actions, including a detailed overview of management changes and new processes implemented to address concerns, with a particular focus on supporting teachers to access a network of support where they are the only teacher of their subject within the college. Members discussed support and performance management, with assurances provided over staff receiving clear messaging around underperformance and expectations.

The Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality highlighted the success of certificate courses and the expansion of level 2 provision, with challenges due to staffing issues in some areas outlined. Members were assured by measures in place to improve outcomes, including strengthened oversight through the new management structure, as well as curriculum support.

Members raised concerns about science performance, with the Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality explaining ongoing support and performance management for staff. Initiatives like the Upland programme and curriculum links with other colleges were aimed at improving science outcomes.

The Principal emphasised the importance of addressing single points of failure in subjects with only one teacher, exploring networks for moderation and support. The college was focused on mitigating these risks and ensuring staff understood their responsibilities.

In response to questions about internal assessments, and performance review periods, the Deputy Principal confirmed ongoing progress updates and robust assessments to monitor improvement were in place, advising that if the timing of outcomes did not align with Committee meetings, interim reports would be circulated.

Item 8.5: Outcomes- Compete Apprenticeship

The Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and External Relations, provided context to the outcomes for apprenticeships, detailing new initiatives and processes that improved achievement rates and high grades. Employer engagement and commitment were outlined as key factors in the success, with positive feedback from both employers and apprentices on the improved onboarding process.

Committee members commended activities undertaken to improving standards in apprenticeship delivery, particularly around employer engagement. Whilst acknowledging there remained improvements to make, the Assistant Principal Apprenticeships and External Relations agreed that the integrity of the recruitment process had been an essential aspect in ensuring students were well supported and given every chance to succeed.

The item concluded with the Committee Chair confirming there were no further questions, agreeing that the outcomes, and in particular the improvement in apprenticeships, success in T Levels, and areas to be addressed, need to be highlighted to the Board.

Item 8 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to accept the update, asking that the targets for 2025/2026 are reviewed, and presented for approval alongside trend data and rationale for changes.

Task: Review performance targets for the 2025–26 academic year to ensure they are realistic and achievable, providing rationale and benchmarking data for revised targets.

Task: Schedule a short meeting to review revised KPIs before the strategy event in October

Task: Provide a mid-year progress update on performance, including data from college assessment points and any available external moderation outcomes. Circulate this if timing does not align with meetings.

9 - Strategic Improvement Plan Update

The Deputy Principal provided a detailed update on the Strategic Improvement Plan, noting that many of the strengths and areas for improvement had already been covered within the Quality of Education reporting. He highlighted the progress made in specific areas, including improvements in the value-added scores, high grades and ALPs, whilst acknowledging overall underperformance in some areas.

In noting that the issues to be addressed were now specific, and not broad areas of underperformance, members supported the intention to focus action to address targeted issues to move forward quickly. The Deputy Principal expressed optimism about the potential for rapid improvement by narrowing the focus to specific issue, whilst summarising the impact of actions from the previous year's Strategic Improvement Plan.

Issues relating to resitting English and maths GCSE's were discussed, with members noting the upcoming visit from the Skills Minister would provide an opportunity to raise the issue directly.

Item 9 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to accept the update.

10 - Teaching and Learning Strategy 2025/26–2026/27

The Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality presented the Teaching and Learning Strategy for 2025/26–2026/27. Members commended the clear implementation plan, agreeing the 'zest for learning' initiative was engaging for staff, and easy to follow.

An outline of the strategy was provided, members noting it includes CPD sessions, good practice hours, and peer observations to foster a collaborative and innovative teaching environment.

In response to questions about consistency of application across curriculum areas, the Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality emphasised the importance of evidence-based techniques and the introduction of action research projects for staff, allowing them to formalise and share their findings. Members were informed the strategy will be monitored through 360 reviews, learner voice activities, and the 'how to' platform, ensuring continuous improvement and a focus on staff development.

The committee welcomed the strategy and discussed the importance of consistency, peer support, and the new Advanced Teaching and Learning Practitioner roles. Members were supportive of the research project initiatives, noting this would be funded and provided the opportunity for staff to share good practice and the outcomes of their research.

The committee agreed to recommend the strategy to the Corporation for approval.

Item 10 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approve the Teaching and Learning Strategy.

11 - Learner Perspectives And Engagement Plan for 2025/26

The Assistant Principal Learner Development and Careers outlined the key aspects of the learner engagement strategy, confirming this mirrored the previous year's approach, with the only updates being changes to roles and responsibilities and monitoring processes.

Members noted the strategy encompasses learner voice processes, student representative activities, Student Council roles, focus groups, and formal surveys. The Assistant Principal Learner Development and Careers highlighted the importance of feedback and actions arising from student input, outlining initiatives and improvements made based on previous surveys, including additional study spaces and refreshed facilities.

Members were advised of new initiatives like the loudspeaker workshops and the careers tracking platform, Grow Far, aimed at enhancing student engagement and development, with feedback on the impact of this to be provided within the next report.

Questions were asked by members around response rates and actions to improve these. The committee discussed the importance of publicising student feedback and actions taken to ensure transparency and responsiveness, asking for consideration to be given to publicising the impact and actions further.

Members commended work to improve student inductions, intended to strengthen relationships and ensure access to support, particularly for English and maths was visible and easily accessible.

Members asked about the impact of Friday afternoon timetabling changes on students, seeking to understand how this was being measured and monitored. The committee was advised that anecdotal feedback was that students appreciated the fuller days, with less lost time, however, some had not noticed a difference, having already had some half days, with the positive impact more notable for staff.

Members discussed feedback from the Corporation in relation to the Corporation's need to better understand how student perspectives feed into Board work. They were advised that the request by the Committee Chair for ideas on how to achieve this had not generated any responses. Members noted the intention for the Deputy Principal to present the Student Engagement Strategy to the Board, with it expected this should ensure the whole Board has a full understanding of the activities that take place, and how these are used to shape strategies and policies.

Item 11 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to accept the reassurances provided by the update, endorsing the minor changes to the strategy, relating to roles and responsibilities.

12 - Complaints

The Assistant Principal Learner Development and Careers presented the annual complaints report, highlighting the decrease in the number of complaints compared to the previous year. Members were informed that of the 31 complaints received, 23 were formal, with 9 upheld and 3 still pending. The Assistant Principal provided an overview of the upheld complaints, which included issues related to course allocation, staff conduct, and work placements.

Members were assured actions had been taken, which included further training for staff and quick resolutions for upheld complaints. The Committee discussed the importance of categorising complaints to identify trends and areas for improvement, as well as incorporating feedback into CPD and staff training.

The Committee discussed the target, which was for zero complaints, with it agreed this was not achievable, or compatible with a culture of continuous improvement.

Item 12 – Resolved: The Committee agreed the report accurately summarised the detailed data reviewed throughout the year, endorsing its presentation to the Corporation for their information and assurance.

13 - Safeguarding

The Deputy Principal led the discussion on safeguarding, providing an overview of the report and reflecting on safeguarding as reported throughout the last academic year.

Members noted the report summarised the data and information presented throughout the year and agreed it was consistent with the data presented within semesterly reports, with sufficient detail to assure the Boar of their oversight.

The Deputy Principal advised that the annual update to the statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' for 2025 had been released after approval of the Safeguarding Policy. Members were assured a review of the policy against the guidance was undertaken over the summer, confirming it did not introduce significant changes, therefore, the only changes were those relating to job titles, roles and responsibilities following the restructuring of the senior team.

The Committee Chair confirmed that the annual report should be recommended to the Corporation, emphasising the importance of contextualised training for governors to ensure a thorough understanding of the policy, process, and report content. The Committee agreed to approve the safeguarding report and the minor amendments to the safeguarding policy, recognising its role in providing assurances to the Corporation. The Director of Governance and Compliance confirmed that training and a presentation of the annual report would be delivered during the October Corporation meeting and Strategy Event.

Item 13 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approve minor amendments to the policy to reflect changes to roles and responsibilities. The Committee resolved to present the annual safeguarding report to the Corporation for assurance and information.

14 - Policies and Procedures for Approval

The Director of Governance & Compliance explained that the updates to various policies were minor amendments primarily due to structural changes within the organisation, confirming there were no substantial changes, or any updates that affected the content or college processes. Members were advised these were all policies that had recently been reviewed and approved, and were not due for an update, with changes only brought to the Committee following the changes to the staff structure.

Committee members reviewed the policies and endorsed updates to the Managing Allegations Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, Careers Policy, Personal and Academic Learning (PAL) Policy, Admissions Policy, and Positive Behaviour Policy.

Item 14 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to recommend the Corporation approve minor amendments to the policies to reflect changes to roles and responsibilities.

15 - Standing items

The Committee Chair noted that there had been no audit reports related to the work of the committee since the last meeting. This agenda item was acknowledged but did not require further discussion.

Item 15 – noted

16 - Committee self-evaluation

The Committee Chair, invited observations or comments regarding the self-evaluation process. The Committee Chair highlighted the importance of reflecting on the committee's performance and highlighted the earlier discussion relating to ensuring the Board understands and is assured by the scrutiny of the Committee.

The Chair expressed disappointment at the lack of reception during the Corporation meeting from governors regarding learner voice feedback. He suggested clearer labelling of key points from detailed discussions to improve communication. The Principal supported this approach, noting that a clear presentation of key points might be effective in ensuring members from outside the Committee clearly understand how learner voice is reviewed and fits into their work.

Item 16 – Approved: The Committee approved the self-assessment and committed to the implementation of the actions to further enhance the impact of their work.

17 - Meeting reflection

17.1 - Risk reflection

The Committee considered updates to risks based on the data reviewed. The Committee Chair reminded members the risk profile changed throughout the academic year following the quality cycle, with current risks relating to enrolment having been discussed earlier. The Deputy Principal assured the Committee that this risk, and its impact in relation to income, would be reviewed in full by the Resources Committee, with no in year impact on the quality of education due to the lagged funding model, which ensured there was time to consider the most appropriate approach to any efficiency savings to minimise the impact on quality.

In reflecting on the reports reviewed, it was agreed the risk related to attainment remained accurate. In considering the most appropriate approach to replacing the removed Ofsted monitoring risk, the Deputy Principal proposed adding a new risk related to the unknown aspects of the new Ofsted framework, which the committee supported. The Principal emphasised the importance of recognising the uncertainty surrounding the methodology of the new framework. The committee asked the SLT to work on the wording of this new risk, to be ratified at the next meeting.

Item 17.1 – Resolved: The Committee resolved to endorse the changes already made to the risk register, asking the SLT to include a new risk relating to Ofsted, incorporating the preparation for an inspection against a new framework, as well as the impact of the inspection outcome.

Task: SLT to incorporate a new risk related to the unknown aspects of the new Ofsted framework.

17.2 - Agree items to be reported to the Corporation

The Committee Chair summarised the items to be reported to the Corporation, including emphasising the improvements in apprenticeships, success in T Levels, and actions to address areas for improvements as discussed during the quality of education item, as well as ensuring the extent and importance of work around learner perspectives is presented, with policy updates to be approved.

The Director of Governance and Compliance clarified that while it was important for the Committee to assure the Board of their work in scrutinising the quality of education, the Committee was informed that a full

breakdown and analysis of the results would be presented at the strategy event in October, negating the need to send the paper.

It was confirmed that the teaching and learning strategy would also need approval, and minor amendments to the complaints and safeguarding policies, as now due for review, would also be sent, along with the summary of policies amended due to roles and responsibilities as a result of the management structure changes. Members agreed to ensure assurances around complaints and safeguarding through the presentation of the annual safeguarding and complaints reports.

Item 17.2 – Approved: The Committee approved the items to be presented for the approval and assurance of the Corporation.

18 - Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 2nd December 2025, at 2.30 in the Boardroom at the Southport College Campus. The Committee Chair confirmed the date and time with the committee, thanked everyone for their time and contributions and closed the meeting at 17.14pm.