



Annual Governance Report
Icollege Management Committee March 2018
Academic Year 2017 2018



Annual Governance Report 2017/18

“Above all we are a vibrant community which learners, staff and governors are proud to belong to”

<p>The Shared Vision</p> <p>By 2019 we will be able to say that: We offer excellent alternative educational provision in which each of our learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves their highest possible educational outcomes. • Develops a strong positive attitude. • Makes the best possible positive contributions to the launch pad for their chosen future. 	<p>Delivering the Vision</p> <p>Our team of staff and governors, working collaboratively, with our stakeholders, will provide a relevant and holistic curriculum, underpinned by strong leadership and teaching of the highest quality that inspires learners.</p>
<p>Our team will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach, challenge and encourage our learners to meet and exceed target grades in all their subjects. • Provide a relevant and holistic curriculum that enables learners to achieve nationally recognised qualifications. • Ensure high levels of numeracy, literacy and communication skills for every learner. • Engender a strong sense of personal responsibility and respect for others. • Make effective use of data to drive self-evaluation and improvement of learner outcomes. • Be passionate about focusing energies, technology and other resources to create and maintain an engaging learning environment appropriate to each learner and each subject. • Be passionate about learning and the creation of a positive learning ethos and culture that fosters key life skills, including independence, communication, resilience, flexibility, integrity and self-discipline. • Place our provision in the top 10% nationally on average data for achievement of value added outcomes. 	<p>We will rely on</p> <p>All team members – learners, staff, governors and stakeholders, having clear accountabilities. Parents and carers being well informed and engaged with our provision.</p> <p>Our culture and ethos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help every learner do the very best they can. • Inspire students and staff alike. • Actively engage all our stakeholders. • Works constantly to meet the needs of current and future learners.



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Introduction

West Berkshire icollege Alternative Provision is a Pupil Referral Unit, its main office is at Independence, Bath Road Newbury, but there are four sites across which the service is provided, two based in Newbury, one in Thatcham and one in Calcot, Reading.

The Management Committee (MC) (in mainstream schools this is called a Governing Board) is responsible for establishing the strategic direction of the school, setting its vision, values and objectives. Agreeing the Schools Development Plan (SDP), its priorities and targets and ensuring the school meets its statutory duties.

The MC ensures accountability by appointing the Headteacher (HT), monitoring progress, performance managing the Head, engaging young people, families, staff and the wider professional network and contributing to the schools self-evaluation. The MC must also ensure that it sets a viable budget, monitors spend and ensures value for money and ensure any risks to the school are managed.

The last academic year saw a major restructuring of the PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) service commissioned by the Local Authority (and Schools Forum) who asked that the previous two services; the Alternative Curriculum Service (ACS) and the Reintegration Service (RS) be reviewed to ensure that a new model was developed that reduced duplication of staff and premises and prioritised resources in order to make the biggest difference to vulnerable learners (vulnerable because the learners have already been excluded from school). It resulted in a reduction in the number of overall places and a reduction in the number of PRU sites from 6 to the current 4. It also saw the appointment of a single Head Teacher.

As a result, the 2017 - 2018 academic year, has been a particularly challenging one for the Management Committee, working to ensure the 'new' single service started successfully and supporting the icollege under the new leadership of our Headteacher, Jacque Davies, who was the ACS HT. Using her experience, vision, sense of purpose and passion for her role, to make the service the best it can be.

The support and knowledge of the previous Chair of the Management Committee, Rod King, who retired in August 2016, was also instrumental in guiding the service through this period of change. I started as a new Chair in September 2017 and have been ably supported by a hugely experienced and knowledgeable Management Committee.

Hence to highlight the MC's key achievements this academic year and our opportunities for further improvement:

Key achievements 2007 - 2018 to date

1: Embedding the Restructuring: The Management Committee (MC) has continuously supported the Headteacher and restructured Senior Leadership Team (SLT), including the appointment of 2 Assistant Headteachers (AHT); AHT for Raising Standards and AHT for Community & Wellbeing. This will help icollege seek improvements in our provision, streamlining services, working towards ensuring that there is a consistent approach across the units, moving on from the prior culture and identity of the previous 2 services based across 6 sites, to develop a new organisation that has remained positive and productive. We have agreed new approaches with the Head that has led to the appointment of a SLT with cross - site responsibilities to bring the best of prior practice to every part of the service.

A new School Development Plan (SDP) and Governance Development Plan (GDP) have been written with the benefit of involvement of staff and governors across the board. These are available on the website and are being regularly monitored and updated as the service develops.

The HT was appointed by Governors ahead of the implementation of the restructure in September 2017 and was performance managed/appraised in December 2017 by Governors, this also gave them the opportunity to celebrate her many achievements. Appraisals for all other staff have been completed and reported to the Personnel Committee and pay awards agreed where appropriate and evidenced.

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The HT along with the SLT and wider teaching and support staff have been focused on firstly ensuring all the pupils were in the right place on day one of the new term and then teaching and learning were sound and secure. Under the leadership of the HT & SLT icollege is now settled and focused on ensuring consistency well across the provision.

2: New Governance Structure: In tandem with the changes in the icollege the governance arrangements needed to adapt as well. This academic year has seen a new more streamlined governance structure developed. The MC is supported by 5 sub committees; TLC (Teaching & Learning Committee), Safeguarding & Wellbeing Committee (SWC), Finance Committee (FC), Personnel Committee (PERS) and Health & Safety, Premises & IT committee (H&SPIT). We have filled key vacancies on the MC and appointed new specialist Lead Governors for Safeguarding, SEND, and Health & Safety, we have a broad range of skills and knowledge, and are in my view an astute governing team, offering a good balance of challenge and support, whilst monitoring and reflecting on the provision's needs when required.

Governors have been ambitious for our Learners, supporting the HT and school to further improve outcomes by asking the right questions, visiting and valuing what they have seen, monitoring performance and offering practical support in community events such as our British Values Week, and other events. As a new Chair, I have undertaken the appropriate training provided by the Local Authority (LA) and I am learning in the new role. Other governors have also attended training according to a skills audit completed last year and alongside a knowledge and confidence survey completed in March 2018.

3; Review of Policies: The Vice Chair with the support of Governors, Clerk and SLT have reviewed all of the existing PRU policies; transferring them to the icollege format, amalgamating them, updating and creating new versions that are clearer in expected practice and demonstrate the vision and culture of the icollege ensuring consistency throughout and equal opportunities for all runs as a golden thread throughout them all.

4: Safeguarding Audit and Anti- Bullying: A new safeguarding audit and an audit of practice around anti-bullying has been undertaken, both have associated actions to further improve practice. Whilst safeguarding is an area the MC considers is good across the service, governors are not complacent and continuously review our practice and keep abreast of latest guidelines.

5: Finance: The year to date has been challenging; having to amalgamate the budgets for 6 sites to 4; implementing a single staffing structure, seeking efficiencies where needed and developing a new single budget. To ease pressure on the FC, the Chair of the MC has become FC Chair and the need for a governor with expertise in this area has now been addressed by the appointment of a new LA governor who will lead on finance for the MC. A new budget monitoring format is being developed and implemented. All grants secured have been spent almost entirely on direct teaching and learning staff, to maximise impact, noting in particular, that with regards Pupil Premium monies, everything that icollege does is aimed at its cohort of vulnerable pupils, many of whom also have SEND support needs.

6: Teaching & Learning: The HT and Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) have been working over the last months to improve the rigour with which our learners achievements and outcomes are assessed. Bringing consistency where possible, whilst noting the particular challenge we have as we provide services to Primary, Secondary, Post 16, Home Education and SEND pupils. This means that the HT and SLT have had to be creative and tenacious in finding solutions to monitor performance and ways to report to Governors that enable effective challenge.

Opportunities for further improvement

Whilst we have made a significant and productive start to the creation of icollege and the school year this far the Management Committee is never complacent. The following highlights to focus on the the coming months:

7:School outcomes and destinations: The SDP continues to be developed to ensure the best outcomes for Learners. This will be reviewed by the MC and its sub committees, ensuring Governors can contribute to its development and offer challenge and support to key areas. In particular we are keen to ensure that;

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- the services staffing structure is fit for purpose moving forward and that it improves good outcomes
- the Home Education service is effective as is the Outreach service
- the primary provision is strengthened
- through the HT, can influence the wider school network and LA approach to the needs of pupils with behaviour challenges and aim to reduce the numbers of pupils being excluded which is of real concern to Governors
- further develop the HTs report (also known as the SEF) with her to enable Governors to challenge and monitor the performance of the school

8: School Governors: through the MC, and a development session to be held in March, we plan to further develop the Governance Development Plan (GDP). Aiming to further strengthen our Governors skills and knowledge and fill our remaining vacancies. We will embed the new committee structure and review this to ensure it is effective and makes best use of school staff and governors time.

9: Safeguarding: we will seek to achieve an anti-bullying accreditation run by the local authority 'Safe In Our Hands' and implement actions from the LSCB's Safeguarding Audit, ensuring our safeguarding and child protection processes remain robust.

10: SEND: we have appointed a Governor with the lead for Special Educational Needs and disability, this recognising the extent to which SEND is now an issue for many of our learners and the impact of the SEND reforms. Over the next few months we will clarify what the key issues are that governors can support on, monitor and what improved outcomes can be sought for our young people.

11: New Finance Lead: We have appointed a new Governor with extensive financial experience and even better, in the field of school finance. Hence we will induct her into her new role, support the effective budget monitoring reporting by school staff and identify key areas for focus in the coming year.

12: Voice of Pupils and Parents: We were sadly not successful in electing a parent governor last term, but are currently working on identifying possible candidates to approach. We recognise that the nature of our provision makes it hard for parents to be governors so we will also seek other means to get the parent voice into the work of the MC and school community. We also wish to increase the voice of the pupils into our work and will look to develop this in the coming months.

13: Embedding icollege, performance management and new policies: Over the coming year we will be supporting the HT and SLT in reducing the current level of frequent short term sickness absence. This will be achieved through the effective implementation of the sickness absence policy and day to day support. We will be supporting the HT and SLT to further embed the new structure, enhance performance management and assessment and ensure that key new policies are familiar and upheld by staff.

Conclusions

In summary it has been a very busy and productive year for the MC and its governors as well as for the icollege. The MC has kept itself informed and appraised on the changing landscape for education nationally as well as locally and are working hard to ensure the right balance of support and challenge is provided to Jacquie and the SLT.

However we do not underestimate the challenge that Jacquie faces to ensure icollege is consistently achieving the best outcomes for our learners and thank her and all our staff for their hard work and dedication to get to where we are now.



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Also as a new Chair I'd like to thank Jackie and each and every member of the management committee who have helped and supported me in the past few months. We have a uniquely (in my view) well qualified and experienced team of Governors. By working together and offering the right support and challenge at the right time, in the right way we can ensure icollege achieves excellence in the future!

We will ensure a consistently positive culture that:

- ***Helps every learner do the very best they can.***
- ***Inspires students and staff alike.***
- ***Actively engages all our stakeholders.***
- ***Works constantly to meet the needs of current and future learners.***

Contact Details	<p>If you would like to contact the Chair of the Management Committee you can do so by email at KReeve@icollege.org.uk or by post to icollege to</p> <p>K Reeve, Chair of Management Committee, Icollege Independence Richmond House, Bath Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1QY.</p>
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