Joint meeting of
EEGT POST-16 EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
WSC POST-16 EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

EASTERN EDUCATION GROUP TRUST

WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 19 May 2025 at 4.00pm

Present physically at OSFC:	J Wakelam, EEGT Trustee and WSC Governor –**Vice Chair** R Cannon, WSC Governor S Daley, EEGT Trustee and WSC Governor – **Chair**
Present virtually:	C Chua, WSC Governor M Downes, WSC Governor S Snowdon, EEGT Trustee (part)
In attendance:	A Adamson, Group Deputy Principal–One Sixth Form A Harvey, Group Assistant Principal – Sixth Form Provision A Hurrell, Group Head of Quality Assurance C Durrant, Group Head of Pastoral and Administration C Shaw, Group Principal – WSC Sixth Form C Warren, Group Head of Careers Guidance Services E Barneveld, Head of School – Duke of Lancaster (observing - part) G Huntington, Group Head of SEND Services J Robson, Group Principal – One Sixth Form J Stockings, Group Assistant Principal – Sixth Form Provision L Chapman, Regional Director SEND (part) L Moody, Group Principal – University and Professional Development(part) N Jennings, Head of School – Chalk Hill (observing - part) N Savvas, Chief Executive Officer (part) R Bamford, Group Assistant Principal – Quality R King, Group Head of Supported Learning S-L Neesam, Group Head of Welfare and Safeguarding S Gales, Governance Professional S Langthorne, Group Assistant Principal S Small, Group Deputy Principal – Abbeygate Sixth Form S White, Head of School – Priory (observing) T Lloyd, Executive Director Skills and Strategic Development
Apologies:	C Fisher, Group Head of Connections and Opportunities D Barton, Group Assistant Principal – Adult J Drake, WSC Governor K Brown, Group Assistant Principal – Teaching and Learning K Points, EEGT Trustee M Williams, WSC Staff Governor N Payne, Group Director Careers, Opportunities, and Progression
Absent:	

		Action
1.	**Declaration of Interests and Apologies for absence** Members recognised the standing declarations. No other conflicts of interest in relation to the items of the agenda were declared. Apologies for absence were received from J Drake, K Points and M Williams. The Chair welcomed the Head of School of the SEND schools as observers.	
2.	**Minutes of the meeting on 19 May 2025** Members reviewed and **agreed** the minutes of the meeting on 19 May 2025 as an accurate record, subject to amending the previous meeting date listed for agenda items 2 and 3. The Governance Professional **noted** that in June 2025 Lisa Ireland resigned as	

OSFC Parent Committee member and Rachael Holden was removed as ASFC Parent Committee member due to non-attendance and advised that we in autumn 2025 we will advertise the role to the parent communities at ASFC and OSFC to elect a new parent member from each.

S Snowdon joined at 4.06pm

3. **Matters arising from the meetings on 19 May 2025**

All matters arising from the previous meetings were either complete or due for future meetings.

4. **First-Hand Feedback**

Members received and considered the paper provided, J Wakelam fed back on her visit to One Sixth Form and R Cannon fed back from her joint visit with C Chua to West Suffolk College sixth form.

The Chair reminded all that the self-assessment review meetings are underway at West Suffolk College and invited members to attend these sessions to understand the quality assurance process.

Review of in-year performance

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5. **Sixth Form Provision**

i. **ASFC**

Members received and considered the paper provided which analysed attendance and retention compared to previous years, progress on the quality improvement plan, the outcome of the progress review 3, courses to monitor and updated on curriculum development plans for next year. S Small summarised the key points.

Members queried why attendance at supervised study was much lower. S Small explained that the supervised study sessions are intervention groups for students with lower attendance, so it is somewhat expected that there may be lower attendance for these sessions given the context of this cohort.

Members queried how often there are the student assemblies this year. S Small explained that this is the first year of student assemblies and there have been four this year. S Small explained that many of the students come from schools where they are used to assemblies and noted these have given a platform for staff to communicate to students about behaviour expectations and support progression planning. Members queried whether the intention is to continue the assemblies next year. S Small confirmed that he plans to continue them.

Members asked for clarification of the pastoral support set up at Abbeygate Sixth Form. S Small explained that every student is assigned a Personal Progress Tutor (PPT) and they meet the students individually for regular Progress Development Review (PDR) sessions to discuss their academic progress and attendance and to offer targeted personalised welfare support when needed.

Members queried what the arts award was and why it has lesser uptake. S Small explained that it is an extra-curricular award like an EPQ though with a clear arts focus. S Small noted while there was a reasonable cohort last year (the first year of running it) this year the numbers have dwindled and informed of plans to discontinue offering it next year.

Members commended the overall improvement in attendance.

Members queried why attendance at music and dance are lower than the other subjects. S Small explained that these courses have much smaller cohorts which impacts the percentages and noted that both those courses are timetabled differently due to the small cohorts i.e. dance due to the teacher working part time and music which we trialled this year over our site and King Edwards VI School. S Small explained the interventions being put in place for next academic year, which included strategies for staff and students.

Members discussed the retention data and queried what happens for those listed as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). C Durrant explained that many of the students who have withdrawn and are listed as NEET were due to medical conditions which meant they could not continue to access any education. C Durrant explained that if we think any student is at risk of becoming NEET, we connect them to the Thrive programme at WSC so they can support them to ensure that no-one is left behind. C Durrant explained that we also continue to closely monitor the destinations of students who withdraw to monitor where they go and to support them onto their next steps e.g. supporting them with application/CV writing, applying to further study and/or employment. C Durrant summarised how we support students with emerging issues throughout their course to support them to continue with their course. Members commended the strong approach which is used by both Abbeygate Sixth Form and One Sixth Form.

S Small summarised the progress against this year's quality improvement plan.

Members discussed the courses to monitor and suggested we review these again at the next meeting, after qualification outcomes are known, to decide whether these should continue onto next year's quality improvement plan. S Small

Members queried the meaning of 'AP' acronym. S Small explained this stands for Assistant Principal.

Members commended the introduction of sustainability courses.

Members discussed the change of Turing trip funding methodology to focus on supporting disadvantaged students and the funding allocations for Abbeygate Sixth Form, One Sixth Form and WSC Sixth Form.

ii. **OSFC**

Members received and considered the paper provided which analysed attendance and retention compared to previous years, progress on the quality improvement plan, the outcome of the progress review 3, courses to monitor and updated on curriculum development plans for next year. A Adamson summarised the key points.

Members queried what leaders plan to change in readiness for the new academic year. A Adamson explained that they have streamlined their supportive discipline policy to make targeted interventions earlier, to have the most impact. C Durrant added that the change of timetable and staffing is now embedded so the pastoral staff have experience of scheduling PPT sessions around the new timetable.

Members queried if, due to the different locations, the demographic cohort at One Sixth Form have greater needs / have more students 'at risk' than Abbeygate Sixth Form, and whether this impacts retention. J Robson explained that the Ipswich community is more diverse and deprived, than the Bury St Edmunds community; though noted that overall attendance and retention is comparable across the sixth forms. S-L Neesam explained how the types of safeguarding concerns vary between each sixth form and how trends can sometimes emerge when looking at students' previous school.

Members queried whether leaders felt there will be improvements in the self-assessment grades compared to last academic year. A Adamson explained that we feel there have been improvements in areas, however we need to await the results of the Progress Review 4 and the end-of-year student outcomes before we can be confident in evaluating the impact.

iii. **WSC sixth form**

Members received and considered the paper provided which analysed attendance and retention compared to previous years, student demographics, predicted achievement and progression, progress on the quality improvement plan, updates on lesson observations and work scrutiny, progression/next steps events, and areas of focus for next year. S Langthorne summarised the key points.

L Chapman, L Moody and N Savvas joined, and N Jennings left the meeting at 5.05pm

Members queried the meaning of the text under ‘adult’ on page 2. S Langthorne apologised for the typo ‘errors’ should read ‘areas’.

Members discussed the plans to use ‘voice to text software’ to support staff and queried the rationale for this. S Langthorne explained that in our most vocational subjects e.g. those at the Built Environment, our lecturers were hired for their skills and knowledge of the vocational practices rather than their proficiency when writing reports; and explained that using software removes some of the barriers for these staff and helps build their confidence when producing reports.

Members discussed this year’s quality improvement plan and queried why the actions relating to apprenticeships are showing as ongoing. S Langthorne and L Moody explained that Apprenticeships operate to a different reporting year to the Sixth Form provision, though assured by the next meeting these actions will have corresponding updates.

iv. **High Needs students (SEN)**

Members received and considered the paper provided which analysed attendance and retention across each sixth form’s supported learning provisions and for HNF students on mainstream qualifications, forecast achievement, predicted numbers for next academic year, updated on annual review completion and ECHP target setting, and curriculum development plans for next academic year. R King and G Huntington summarised the key points.

Members reflected that there isn’t a correlation between attendance and retention and queried why this is. R King explained that many of the students have mental health and/or physical health issues which impact their attendance.

Members queried if these students are on standard qualifications. R King explained that some students are working towards mainstream qualifications, and some are on RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement which is non-accredited learning) qualifications.

Members discussed the growing number of HNF students and queried if this is sustainable. G Huntington reflected that due to the requirement of the SEN Code of Practice, the Group is required to support a significant number of consultations annually; however, noted that we continue to liaise with the local authority to ensure these students are appropriately funded so we can meet their needs.

Members commended the strength of the report and discussed the local authority’s progress on their plans to improve its approach to ‘preparation for adulthood’.

6. <u>Elected Home Educated students</u>

Members received and considered the paper provided which analysed attendance and retention and updated on plans for this provision next academic year. J Stocking summarised the key points.

E Barneveld left the meeting at 5.41pm

The Chair informed that she has received first hand feedback from an incoming student that the onboarding support they received was very comprehensive.

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES

7. **Involvement in the community and competitions**

Members received and considered the paper provided which summarised students' participation in local, regional and national competitions, and in charity and volunteering activities in the local and international community.

Members congratulated the students who have won awards and commended West Suffolk College sixth form's Hair and Beauty team for their students' exceptional performance.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

8. **Careers IAG (inc. provisional destinations)**

Members received and considered the paper provided which analysed the intended destinations from the exit survey data, UCAS applications, update on the changes to Gatsby benchmarks and to our labour market information tools and informed of plans for further improvement/developments for next academic year. C Warren summarised the key points.

Members commended the strength of the training of staff to support them to have confident and informed discussions with students about careers information, advice and guidance.

C Warren to provide additional information to the Governance Professional to circulate. — C Warren

Members queried why such a high proportion of students intend to take a gap year. C Warren explained that some students are unsure about their next steps and so use a gap year to defer their decision making. C Warren noted that we keep in touch with these students to support them to progress to their next steps and to raise awareness of the Group's diverse and inclusive offer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

9. **Complaints and Compliments**

Members received and considered the paper provided which collated the complaints and compliments for each sixth form this academic year. A Hurrell summarised the key points.

A Hurrell left the meeting at 5.53pm

Members discussed the complaints about parking at One Sixth Form and reflected that the local residential area has limited parking and discussed the proactive ways we are working with students, the community and councillors to create solutions.

R Bamford fed back on the compliments received following best practice sharing visits from other education providers.

10. **Risk Register Extract**

Members received and considered the extract from the Risk Register provided and discussed the 0 red, 2 amber and 3yellow risks.

Members reviewed the risks and **felt assured** that the mitigations were appropriate.

11. **Policies**

i. **Careers policy**
ii. **Careers strategy**
iii. **Student conduct and behaviour policies**

Members received, considered and **approved** the above policies. The Chair invited members to share any comments/corrections with the Governance Professional.

Members asked that all future policies include a summary of the material changes in the revision summaries. S Hope

12. **<u>Any Other Business</u>**

- **Accountability Agreement**

T Lloyd informed that the Accountability Agreement has been finalised and will be uploaded by the deadline.

- **Quality of reports**

The Chair thanked the Executive for the strength of the written reports and the in-meeting summaries.

The meeting closed at 6.12pm