

**MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE**

**TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2026 AT 9:30AM**

**PRINCIPALS OFFICE**

**Clerk:** Ms S Gardiner

In attendance	C Johns, (Chair), M Wright, G Bristow (online), I Cass R Kay (Principal), P Hunter, D Rutley, R Charlton (online), R Milkins
Apologies	M Botwe  Attendance excused for H Taylor and J Lewis due to Ofsted Inspection
Non-governor attendance	A Farrar (Director of Finance) H Fazackerley (for item 5 only) T Cosgrave (for item 6 only) S Catania (for item 8 only)

**MINUTES**

**Item Title**

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies were received M Botwe. Attendance was excused for staff Members H Taylor and J Lewis due to Ofsted Inspection.

**2. Declaration of Members' Interest**

There were no declarations of Members' interest.

**Papers received had been uploaded to Decisions and were available to Governors one week prior to the meeting.**

**3. Minutes from the meetings held on 3 February 2026.**

**To confirm and approve the Part 1 Minutes of the meetings held on 3 February 2026.**

The minutes of the Corporation meetings held on 3 February 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

**4. Matters arising from the meeting held on 3 February 2026**

The Director of Governance confirmed that all outstanding actions have now been completed.

**5. In Depth Report: Presentation on Corporate Services, Learner Engagement, Marketing and Applications**

Helen Fazackerley (HF), Director of Corporate Services, attended the meeting for this item only and presented an update on Corporate Services, Learner Engagement, Marketing and Applications. HF highlighted the significant achievements and ongoing work in these areas. HF confirmed that there has been a substantial increase in school engagement, with 81 encounters this year and 15,000+ students seen. There has also been broader engagement across all year groups, including year 7 students. HF emphasised the importance of maintaining strong relationships with feeder schools and detailed the success of initiatives such as the Careers Leaders Breakfast and school taster weeks. HF advised that 80% of 25/26 applications came from the College's top 20 feeder schools.

Looking ahead, the College has new target areas in Staffordshire and new bus routes have been introduced to facilitate student access. HF confirmed that alumni involvement has also proven successful, allowing potential learners to hear from them about their journey at the College. HF confirmed that enrolment continues to grow, with applications growing by 27% from 23/24.

In relation to marketing performance, HF advised that there has been growth in social media engagement across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Linked In. The College made the decision to move away from marketing on radio for example and focused more on open events and developing marketing material. HF was pleased to share the newly created College Guide saw the College win Silver at the recent FE First Awards. There are already plans to develop this further based on student feedback. Year-round communication including newsletters, advent calendars and easter bars have been effective in maintaining contact with students and parents.

HF shared college achievements with the Board, with the Silver Award for marketing, nominee for Employer of the Year and the Automotive team being shortlisted for IMI Automotive Excellence award. The College is also number 1 in Cheshire on achievements for 16–19-year-olds. HF shared initiatives for commercial engagement, with a confirmed partnership with the NHS and a recent filming opportunity for a Netflix production.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried what the process is when a course is oversubscribed.** HF advised that for some courses, the entry requirements have been increased, however the College are mindful that they need to maintain their inclusivity.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether the possible phone ban in education could affect marketing campaigns.** HF advised that a lot of schools already have phone bans in place and this has not affected engagement or application numbers. The team are meeting face to face with potential learners at school events and assemblies.

**The Board wished to thank HF for her achievements, the impact of which is clear by the increase of application and enrolments number year on year.**

**HF left the meeting.**

**6. In Depth Report: Presentation on Apprenticeships, Quality Assurance and Finance**

Tracy Cosgrave (TC), Vice Principal Commercial Services, joined the meeting for this item only to present an update on Apprenticeships. TC confirmed that apprenticeship achievement rates for 24/25 were good 69.7%, with the College reaching 4<sup>th</sup> in the Greater Manchester area. TC advised the projected achievement for 25/26 is 73%. Apprenticeship income is on target for 25/26.

**CHALLENGE: A Member requested an update on the development of standards with employers for Apprentices.** TC confirmed that the team had carried out a lot of work on this, meeting with employers to ascertain their apprenticeship needs. Team members have also met with employers out in the community, for example childcare providers, to ensure that all curriculum areas are kept up to date with employer needs.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether there had been any impact from the changes in Employment Law, around day 1 rights.** TC advised that there has been no impact from this, recruitment continues to be strong.

**The Board wished to congratulate TC and her team on their achievements.**

**TC left the meeting.**

## **7. Mid-Year Safeguarding Report**

Seb Catania (SC), Director of Student Services, joined the meeting for this item only. SC spoke to the Mid-Year Safeguarding Report, confirming that it covers term 1 and term 2. SC advised that there have been 700 safeguarding referrals this academic year, relating to just under 400 students. The overall number of referrals is slightly down compared to last year, but the number of students supported has increased by 17%.

The introduction of The HUB has strengthened the culture of safeguarding, making it more visible and accessible to students and staff. New staff members receive thorough training on safeguarding from day one, with ongoing development throughout the year. The college has focused on early help to prevent escalating concerns, with the introduction of a new Wellbeing Officer.

Specific initiatives, such as bespoke days for health and social care students, have been effective in reducing peer-on-peer cases and disciplinary actions. The report also highlighted the support provided to high needs learners, with over half of the high needs learners accessing safeguarding support.

The College has seen an increase in substance misuse cases, particularly recreational cannabis use. The College works closely with Change Grow Live to provide support, but faces challenges in getting students to consent to referrals. The College emphasises professional behaviours and the importance of not attending college under the influence.

Attendance data for students with safeguarding concerns shows an average attendance of 74%, reflecting the barriers faced by these vulnerable students. The College prioritises keeping students safe while also ensuring they remain engaged with education.

Staff training on safeguarding has been effective, with mandatory online training complemented by face-to-face sessions on topics like prevent and county lines. These sessions have led to an increase in referrals, which shows that staff understand the reporting requirements and were to direct referrals too.

The report also introduced a new category of community safety, addressing issues outside of college that impact students, such as difficulties with groups outside of college and substance misuse. The college works closely with local police to address these issues and increase their presence in the local area.

The student assistance programme has been introduced, providing 24/7 support, but requires long-term embedding to be fully effective. The college plans to prioritise this going forward.

The discussion concluded with a recognition of the success of the safeguarding hub and the importance of sharing good practice across the college. The college continues to go above and beyond in its safeguarding efforts, with senior leaders trained to level 3 and regular DBS checks.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried how learners with high needs access support.** SC confirmed that this can vary from direct requests or via staff referrals.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether the welfare team were aware of high needs learners concerns when they start at the College.** SC advised that this information comes via the transition data from school, however there can be some delay in this filtering through.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried the staff training and whether this is working well.** SC advised that all staff are required to complete mandatory online training for safeguarding on an annual basis. SC has also introduced face to face to sessions that work alongside the online training, to ensure that staff have a full and clear understanding of the procedures. SC added that following this training, there has been an increase in referrals to the welfare team.

**SC left the meeting.**

## **8. Teaching & Learning**

The report writer was unable to attend the meeting to present the reports due to the Ofsted Inspection. The Principal provided an overview in her absence.

### **i. College Training & Development Report**

This report provided an overview of staff development activities for the period August 2025 – April 2026. The programme has focused on enhancing teaching practice, strengthening safeguarding awareness and improving support for learners with additional needs.

The Board noted the content of the report and commented on how well staff development is structured and could see the value of the introduction of the How2 platform.

### **ii. In Year Exam Achievement**

This report provided an update on the January exam series results in the current academic year.

The Board noted the content of the report.

### **iii. A Level Provision**

This report provided an update on the current position of the A Level provision. It outlined the composition of the current student cohort, including learner numbers and key characteristics, and provided an overview of predicted achievement data.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried what strategies are being put in place to improve results.** RK confirmed that this provision was in its infancy and required further embedding. However, a deep dive had been completed into the area and it is predicted that results will improve following the summer exam series.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried what the demand for A Levels were and if the College was limited on capacity.** RK confirmed that there is a high demand for A Levels. The entry requirements were also high, with students requiring both maths and English GCSE's. RK added that Cheshire College South & West has a large A Level provision, so this offer would continue post merger.

## 9. Audit Committee

The Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that the Committee met on 17 March 2026 and the minutes had been made available to the Board for their review.

The Chair advised that internal audits are continuing with the following audits taking place:

- Payroll and Expenses – initial report completed, good audit, awaiting final comments from Macclesfield College.
- Risk Management – audit brief issued, expected completion April 2026.
- Financial Controls – audit brief issued, expected completion April 2026.
- Cyber Security – audit brief issued, expected completion May 2026.
- Student Records – audit brief issued, expected completion June 2026.

The Director of Governance added that the Health & Safety Audit was to be carried out prior to the end of the academic year, in order to ensure that all audits were completed pre-merger.

All audit reports are to be presented to the Audit Committee on 16 June, with an update provided to Board in July.

Risks continue to be managed robustly, with additional risks included in the register regarding the merger. The Chair confirmed that the Transition Steering Group have clear oversight of the separate merger risk register and are provided updates on a monthly basis.

## 10. Business

### i. Management Accounts for period ending 28 February 2026

Annika Farrar, Vice Principal Finance and Estates, presented the Management Accounts for period ending 28 February 2026 and noted the following points:

- The financial health of the College remains good and is forecast to remain so to year end. AF confirmed that the Deputy FE Commissioner had had sight of the accounts and has been assured that finances remain good.
- Cash days remain below the sector benchmark, however the Board were assured that the current status is higher than originally forecast for this time of year.
- The College is due to receive a FECCA payment in May and AF requested Board approval for these funds to be used to improve the IT infrastructure and the Construction curriculum area. **This request was approved.**

## 11. Policies

The following policies were reviewed and approved by the Board:

- Safeguarding Policy 25/26
- Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures

## 12. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next Corporation Meeting will take place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 9:30am.

### **13. Impact**

The Board were in agreement that they received a thorough and robust overview of the safeguarding procedures and could clearly see the positive impact of the Student HUB and additional pastoral staff. They were also pleased to see the continued success of school engagement and marketing, the impact of which is clear with rising numbers year of year. The Board wished to thank staff members for their presentations and their commitment to the College's success.