

## Minutes – City Academy Council

**Date:** 1 October 2025  
**Location:** City Academy (CLF Institute)  
**Time:** 5.00 pm

**Present:**

Ruth Pickersgill (RP)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Chair)
Claire Rodgers (CR)	Teacher Academy Councillor
Mahalah Katz (MK)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
Donna Taylor (DT)	Parent Academy Councillor
Tony Searle (TS)	Executive Principal
Jason Clarkson (JC)	Student Advocate

**Attendees:**

Ben Tucker (BT)	Principal
Catherine Hickey (CH)	Assistant Principal
Linda Corbidge (LC)	Clerk

**Apologies:**

Abdi Mohamed (AM)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
Sejal Patel (SP)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Co Vice Chair)
Leigh McKenna (LM)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
Leah Dowty (LD)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Co Vice Chair)
Kate Yedigaroff (KY)	Parent Support Staff Academy Councillor
Kerys Taylor (KT)	Academy Councillor

Item	Description	Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	
1.1	RP welcomed councillors to the meeting.	
1.2	Discussion took place on the requirement to complete training within the first meeting. <b><u>ACTION: TS will feedback on discussion around training provision.</u></b>	TS
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
2.2	There were no verbal declarations of interest made for this meeting.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting held 18 June 2025 were approved as a true copy.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
4.1	<i>BT will arrange for councillor information on the website to be posted in Reception.</i> <b><u>Action: BT will check if outstanding bio received.</u></b>	BT
4.2	<i>JC to discuss with JCA their work with the Anti Bullying Alliance - taken forward</i> <b><u>Action: JC will follow up with JCA this term following a change of staff leading anti-bullying policy at JCA.</u></b>	JC
4.3	<i>BT will share RSHE Policy after meeting.</i> <i>LM and DT will arrange a link visit with the Academy RSHE lead for Term 1 next year.</i> <b><u>Action: DT will set up link meeting this term directly with RSHE Lead and complete visit note.</u></b>	DT
4.4	<i>RP will clarify with AM in September regarding continuing for a second term.</i> RP reported that due to work commitments AM will not be continuing for a second term.	

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4.5	<i>Councillors to contact RP re their interest in taking on any of RP's link roles, with the aim to support handover at some point during the next year.</i> Councillors suggested that an interest or experience in safeguarding could be one of the skills sought when seeking to fill the extra sponsor councillor vacancy.	
4.6	<i>It was agreed that a proposal on cultural headwear within the Uniform Policy would be brought to the Academy Council once further work has been done.</i> CH explained the update to the Uniform Policy which reflected the Halo Code and recent staff surveys. Councillors supported the update.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Chairs Update</b>	
5.1	RP reported that a group of councillors had attended a meeting in Term 6 to support with planning for the Academy Improvement Plan.	
5.2	RP reminded councillors that they needed to log into Governor Hub to complete their annual declarations. <b><u>ACTION: All councillors, including staff councillors should complete their annual declarations (Log into Governor Hub/Academy Council/Full Profile/Compliance).</u></b>	<b>All</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Election for Vice Chair</b>	
6.1	RP requested item taken forward to next meeting. <b><u>ACTION: Take forward election of Vice Chair to next meeting.</u></b>	<b>RP</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Appoint/confirm link roles</b>	
7.1	It was noted that link roles remained unchanged.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Academy Council Report</b>	
<b>8.1</b>	<b>Trial Inspection</b>	
8.1.1	BT explained that it has been an eventful and good start to the new term explaining that CAB had been asked to trial an inspection under the new Ofsted Framework. BT highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAB had been pleased with the feedback from inspectors.</li> <li>• An area of focus was recommended on attendance and behaviour.</li> <li>• Attendance was already a first priority on the Academy Improvement Plan as attendance was too low at 87.2% last year. From exams outcomes, students with 100% attendance averaged grade 5.7, students with 95% averaged 4.8.</li> </ul>	
<b>8.2</b>	<b>Results</b>	
8.2.1	BT presented the results and highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No progress data was available this year.</li> <li>• Since the Academy Council Report, re-marks have resulted in two students achieving higher grades in Maths. Overall, there was a significant increase in students attaining grades 9–5, with Maths showing the greatest improvement—over 40% of students achieved a Grade 5 or above.</li> <li>• Improvements were noted in Attainment 8 scores.</li> <li>• Overall, the school is satisfied with the results.</li> <li>• The aim next year is for grades 9–4 to exceed 60%, which is considered achievable, and for the average grade across all subjects to start at Grade 4.</li> <li>• Maths and English performed well, English results were really positive. The number of students sitting Triple Science doubled and Combined Science did well.</li> <li>• Subjects of concern were highlighted:</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sport: A new Head of Sport has been appointed this year, and there is confidence that improvements will be made.</li> <li>○ History: The Head of History is reintegrating into school following a long-term absence and is receiving support.</li> <li>○ Art &amp; Design: Current performance is disappointing and is under review.</li> <li>○ Spanish: Results are below expectations, with a trend of fewer students opting for languages. Arabic remains popular, and the school may consider offering it in the future.</li> </ul>	
8.2.2	Discussion took place on Bucket 3 options, with TS emphasising the need to focus on these subjects. Product Design and Music were identified as areas requiring improvement. BT noted that other subjects need to raise standards to match the strong quality of teaching seen in English and Maths.	
8.2.3	BT reported that Ofsted had been satisfied with the curriculum and teaching, validating the school's thoughts around both inexperienced and experienced teachers. Looking ahead, the teaching and learning strategy will focus on replicating the successful differentiation model used in Maths across all other subjects.	
8.2.4	Councillors discussed the ethnicity breakdown of the results. It was noted that the Somali cohort achieved strong outcomes at grades 9–5, and councillors encouraged the school to share this success within the community. Councillors queried why Asian pupils appeared to have attained below the national average, which is unusual. BT explained that the proportion of Asian pupils in this cohort was small and provided further context for why those individual pupils did not meet the national average.	
8.2.5	<p><b>Is there a decline in the number of students choosing vocational subjects?</b></p> <p>More students are opting for Product Design and Drama. However, the number of students studying Sport remains consistently low. Within Art and Design, Photography continues to perform well, while the other vocational subject is underperforming. The focus moving forward is to ensure consistency and quality of teaching across all vocational subjects.</p>	
8.2.6	<p><b>Are we offering a Business vocational subject?</b></p> <p>We are currently not offering Business. Although it is a popular option, we may need to decide against including it in the curriculum as we are unable to appoint a specialist teacher due to the shortage of qualified Business teachers.</p>	
8.2.7	<p>Discussion focused on balancing subject choice with maintaining quality teaching. Further key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to reduce 30 minutes of teaching time per day to align with directed time in other schools.</li> <li>• Consideration of offering more Computer Science and ensuring quality in Psychology, where specialist teaching is required for a small cohort.</li> <li>• Councillors queried whether the challenge of finding specialist teachers for some subjects is Trust-wide; it was noted this is a national issue.</li> <li>• BT highlighted the need to review option blocks due to fewer students taking languages and subject preference trends.</li> </ul> <p>TS emphasised the importance of good communication to parents and pupils around the curriculum offer.</p> <p><b>Action: Curriculum offer and support from councillors to be discussed at the next Breakfast Meeting.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(TS left the meeting)</i></p>	<b>BT/RP</b>
8.2.8	<p>BT shared additional details regarding the trial Inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspectors noted strong progress overall. Compared to similar schools, CAB performed well.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proportion of grades at 7 and above continues to rise.</li> <li>Feedback highlighted that safeguarding is judicious and effective; the school is regarded as a safe haven.</li> <li>Inspectors observed that leadership is held accountable by the Academy Council, resources are used wisely, and decisions prioritise students' best interests.</li> <li>Considering the school's context, leadership and management are delivering above-average efforts compared to other schools,</li> <li>Areas for Development               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance</li> <li>Variation in lesson delivery</li> <li>Careers education and work experience (an advert is currently out for a Careers and Pathway Leader)</li> <li>Extra-curricular activities – discussion included the range of clubs offered and the context that many students attend the mosque after school</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
8.2.9	<p><b>SEND K numbers appear to be low. How is the school is meeting these needs and what plans are in place?</b></p> <p>The newly appointed SENCO has already identified this issue and is taking action. Consistency in teaching will help address this concern.</p>	
8.3	<b>Student Voice</b>	
8.3.1	<p>JC reported that Student Voice will be launched later this term.</p> <p><b>Action: JC to share update on Student Voice at next meeting.</b></p>	JC
8.4	<b>Safeguarding, including link role and termly report check</b>	
8.4.1	<b>Action: Annual Safeguarding Report and Termly Report taken forward to next meeting.</b>	BT
<b>9</b>	<b>Agenda planning for year</b>	
9.1	<p>Discussion took place on agenda planning and areas of focus informed by results, safeguarding report and risk register. The following focus areas were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum</li> <li>Attendance</li> </ul>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
10.1	The following reviewed policies were <i>noted</i> by Academy Councillors: CLF Attendance, Charging and Remissions and Data Protection.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC</b>	
11.1	None.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
12.1	The Breakfast Meeting will take place on 25 November.	
<b>13</b>	<b>Training</b>	
13.1	Non-staff Academy Councillors present completed Governance Essentials and Safeguarding training. It was noted that any absent non-staff councillors would be contacted to complete the training at another session.	

The meeting closed at 7.00pm

### Meetings for 2025-26

<b>CAB</b>	<b>5-7pm</b>
Term 1	Wednesday 1st October

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Term 2	Wednesday 3rd December
Term 3	Wednesday 4th February
Term 4	Wednesday 25th March
Term 6	Wednesday 1st July