

## Minutes – City Academy Council

**Date:** 21 October 2024  
**Location:** City Academy (CLF Institute)  
**Time:** 5.00 pm

**Present:**

Ruth Pickersgill (RP)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Chair)
Ben Tucker (BT)	Principal
Leah Dowty (LD)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Co Vice Chair)
Donna Taylor (DT)	Parent Academy Councillor
Jason Clarkson (JC)	Student Advocate ( <i>from 6.1.2</i> )
Tony Searle (TS)	Executive Principal ( <i>items 1-8</i> )
Mahalah Katz (MK)	Sponsor Academy Councillor

**Attendees:**

Linda Corbidge (LC)	Academy Council Clerk
Catherine Hickey (CH)	Vice Principal

**Apologies:**

Kerys Taylor (KT)	Support Staff Academy Councillor
Sejal Patel (SP)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Co Vice Chair)
Claire Rodgers (CR)	Teacher Academy Councillor
Abdi Mohamed (AM)	Sponsor Academy Councillor

**Absent:**

Leigh McKenna (LM)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
Mohamed Elmi (ME)	Sponsor Academy Councillor

Item	Description	Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	
1.1	RP welcomed councillors to the meeting.	
<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 Meetings</b>	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting held 3 July 2024 were approved as a true copy.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
4.1	SLT member for Pupil Premium now confirmed, BT will provide MK with contact details. Mahalah, Ben and Ryan have now met and the report will be published on the website shortly. <b>ACTION: BT will advise councillors when the policy is published on the website.</b>	<b>BT</b>
4.2	Staff survey results to first meeting next term. BT shared staff survey results from last year, explaining that a document had been shared with staff outlining 20 items which had been addressed following the survey. This included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not enough opportunity for staff to be listened to - meetings are now set with SLT to give staff opportunity to feed back.</li> <li>More unhealthy snacks to be available for staff – these are now available in the staff room in addition to healthy options in The Venue.</li> </ul> <p>The same survey will be re-done for comparison in time set aside on Inset day to support increased completion by staff as there were only 60 surveys completed last time. Academy councillors noted the positive responses in the survey.</p>	

Item	Description	Action
	Council noted that a staff surgery had been held the previous week but it clashed with a teaching development session.	
<b>4.2.1</b>	<b>Are you able to analyse answers by teaching/non-teaching staff?</b> Not at present but we will look at this going forward. <b><u>ACTION: BT to look at analysing future staff surveys by teaching/non-teaching staff.</u></b>	<b>BT</b>
<b>4.2.2</b>	<b>Is there a previous survey available for comparison?</b> Not with the same questions. We will use the survey on Inset day for comparison.	
4.3	<i>Share revised ethnicity data before end of term.</i> BT shared revised student outcome ethnicity data. <b><u>ACTION: BT will add updated document to Governor Hub</u></b>	<b>BT</b>
4.4	<i>Discuss SEND notional funding further with RP – to be discussed outside of meeting.</i>	
4.5	<i>Share template Visit Form on Governor Hub – completed.</i>	
4.6	<i>Arrange for Academy Councillors photos and roles to be posted on Academy Noticeboard.</i> <b><u>ACTION: BT will arrange for the updated information on the website to also be posted in Reception.</u></b>	<b>BT</b>
4.7	<i>Invite Community Engagement Network to have stalls at Parents' evenings – RP confirmed this was done and they had also been invited to the Options evening.</i> <i>Trial a video update for parents from the Principal 3 times a year.</i> BT confirmed this would be done in Terms 3, 4 and 6.	
4.8	<i>CR will issue a short staff survey on what staff would like to be available in the vending machine.</i> Completed, see item 4.2.	
4.9	<i>JC to report on Student Voice process for next year. See item 7.</i>	
4.10	<i>Share agreement with unions with Councillors.</i> BT updated that follow a further union meeting last term, the union had recommended to members that there should not be another strike day. BT is working hard with staff going forward to prevent future actions.	
4.11	<i>JC to seek student voice on reasons for absence from students with high absence.</i> BT reported that persistent absence benchmarked well against other CLF schools. The problem is much more with broken weeks of students with lower levels. <b><u>ACTION: JC to share student voice report with councillors on reasons for absence from students with high absence.</u></b>	<b>JC</b>
4.12	<i>Term by term data on incidents to always be included in the Termly Safeguarding Report.</i> <i>Termly suspensions data to always be included in Academy Council report.</i> It was noted that the Annual Safeguarding Report is a CLF template which does not include Term 6 data separately.	
4.13	<i>Parent Shield initiative will be looked at in AIP meeting next week.</i> Discussion took place on current mobile phone policy. BT outlined the policy and CPD delivered last week as the policy requires consistency from staff to confiscate mobile phones if seen during the school day.	
<b>4.13.1</b>	<b>Is there clear communication with parents around the policy for mobile phone use in school?</b> Yes, there has been information given in all Year 6 meeting with parents. Councillors suggested that further communication be sent to all parents due to tightening of the policy. LD said that she would send BT a link to a webinar with 3 school leaders on mobile phone use. <b><u>ACTION: BT will share further communication to all parents on mobile phone policy.</u></b>	<b>BT</b>
<b>4.13.2</b>	<b>Is the policy adjusted for SEND pupils, e.g. a case-by-case basis for reasonable adjustments?</b>	

Item	Description	Action
	The policy relates to all students; however, the year teams and pastoral teams know their year groups well, and make 'reasonable adjustments' where necessary. Discussion followed that some schools have a designed space for students with reasonable adjustments suggesting the possibility of controlled mobile phone use within the inclusion area.	
4.14	<p><i>RP will meet with BT to look at the Risk Register, Risk Register to be shared at next meeting.</i></p> <p>BT reported that the Risk Register was similar to last year. Repair of the sports hall roof has now moved to the top risk; BT is working with TS on this as a clearer plan of action is now required.</p> <p><b>ACTION: BT will share Risk Register on Governor Hub after the meeting with RP.</b></p>	<b>BT</b>
4.15	<i>RP will feed back on the proposed changes to Academy Council make up and timings of meetings. Completed.</i>	
4.16	<i>Clerk to share latest template AC Report with BT – completed.</i>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
5.1	<b>Membership</b>	
5.1.1	<p>Parent Academy Councillor election will take place shortly.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk will send documentation to academy after half term.</b></p>	<b>LC</b>
5.1.2	It was agreed that Sejal and Leah would continue as joint Vice Chairs this year.	
5.1.3	RP asked councillors to contact her if they would be interested in also becoming an Academy Councillor at Evergreen Primary.	
5.2	<b>Link roles</b>	
5.2.1	All link councillors were confirmed as undertaking the same link roles as last year.	
5.3	<b>Visit Notes</b>	
5.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link visit notes had been shared for EDI, Teaching and Learning and Safeguarding.</li> <li>• SEND – next visit 15 November (visits in Term 2,4,6).</li> <li>• Literacy – LD will forward note of visit shortly. LD commented that she had been pleased to hear how teaching and learning and literacy are feeding into each other.</li> <li>• Pupil Premium and CEIAG – MK will update at next meeting.</li> </ul>	
5.3.2	BT reported that the whole of year 11 had enjoyed their first student interviews undertaken by independent careers advisors. Any Year 11s who had expressed that they didn't know what they wanted to do will have another interview.	
5.4	<b>Training</b>	
5.4.1	<p>RP reminded councillors of the importance of completing the required on line safeguarding and governance training by the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> October.</p> <p><b>ACTION: All councillors to complete required training.</b></p>	<b>All</b>
5.5	<b>Breakfast Meeting</b>	
5.5.1	RP reported that the breakfast meeting had been a useful meeting on OFSTED requirements; the presentation is in the meeting file on Governor Hub.	
5.6	<b>Immersion Day</b>	
5.6.1	Notes of the Immersion Day and the meeting with the Student Council on safeguarding are on Governor Hub.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Parental Engagement &amp; Community Engagement Verbal Updates</b>	
6.1	<b>Parent Engagement</b>	

Item	Description	Action
6.1.1	RP reported that there had been a useful presentation on PSHE at the community engagement meeting. BT said that several other CLF schools had expressed interest in attending the meetings to share best practice. <b>ACTION: BT to ask Jo to share details and dates with schools/collate attendance.</b>	BT
6.1.2	<b>Is there any update on when the Parent App will be launched?</b> BT explained that there had been some delays with launching the App; the aim is to get it up and running by Christmas as the App would make a huge difference to communication with parents. Councillors requested that this be put in place as soon as possible. <b>ACTION: BT to prioritise launching the App and provide an update at next meeting.</b>	BT
6.1.3	BT reported that there had been over 160 families, predominately from Whitehall/Redfield area, attending the open evening. Open mornings were also fully booked for this term.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Student Voice</b>	
7.1	JC updated on student voice this year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim was to be more student led. Students had put forward nominations to be delegates for the Student Council in their year group, then voted on. Everyone who had put forward their names as a nominee would also be involved in student voice.</li> <li>• Delegates will lead the conversations with their year group and further student voice would be collected through other staff.</li> <li>• First meeting had been held and delegates are happy with the agenda set for the year. Timing of the next meeting is November 14<sup>th</sup> to collate feedback for the next AC meeting.</li> <li>• Some delegates had already given a talk to local councillors</li> <li>• The CAB website had been updated to show the process.</li> </ul> BT said he felt confident that student voice was being collected.	
7.2	<b>How can we get qualitative evidence from pupil voice to feed into Pupil Premium?</b> JC responded that Councillors are welcome to contact him to arrange to attend a meeting of the school council – dates are on the website page.	
7.3	<b>It would be really useful to have student voice on teaching and learning and what students say about reading for pleasure.</b> <b>ACTION: JC to seek student voice on teaching and learning and reading for pleasure and feed back to next meeting</b>	JC
<b>8</b>	<b>Academy Council Report</b>	
8.1	<b>Quality of Teaching and Learning</b>	
8.1.1	BT reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a result of the fully recruited SLT team, the academy felt as if there was more capacity in the building this year. The academy is fully recruited.</li> <li>• There is a new SLT lead on Teaching and Learning and he is developing a comprehensive framework. More lesson observations had been able to take place this term than the whole of last year and heads of departments had been able to do learning walks as they now have cover.</li> <li>• There are no concerns about any ECT failing.</li> </ul>	
8.1.2	A productive discussion followed on teaching and learning practices. On a recent visit, LD (Teaching and Learning Link) had observed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Robust Systems:</b> Ryan’s systems for observation notes and dissemination are robust and methodical.</li> <li>• <b>Support from Chris Baker:</b> LD recommended using Chris Baker from CLF central for significant coaching needs. BT mentioned that Chris Baker would be talking to middle leaders about handling difficult conversations, which has been well received.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inconsistencies in Practice:</b> There are still some inconsistencies, and it's suggested that more middle leaders should observe lessons to address these gaps. The main difference was the pace of lessons.</li> <li>• <b>Observing Excellent Practice:</b> LD emphasized the importance of staff observing excellent practice, recommending that they focus on one aspect of an expert's practice at a time.</li> </ul>	
8.2	<b>Attendance</b>	
8.2.1	<p><b>Looking ahead to next summer, what are you putting in place regarding non-attendance around summer holidays?</b></p> <p>BT explained that actions included extensive communication with families which emphasised the importance of year-round attendance. The majority of families had responded positively and returned as expected this September.</p>	
8.2.2	<p><b>There is quite an attendance gap for Pupil Premium students - what specific targeted interventions are there for those students?</b></p> <p>BT explained that the most impactful measures had included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased spending on pastoral teams.</li> <li>• Building strong relationships with families to understand and support students.</li> <li>• Enhancing the student experience with enjoyable food, funding for trips/discounts, and hiring a second attendance officer.</li> <li>• Utilising student trackers to monitor and improve attendance, particularly for those with very low attendance rates.</li> </ul>	
8.2.3	<p>TS emphasised that whilst it had been noted that CAB's PP attendance gap compares favourably with other similar CLF schools, it was also important to monitor CAB's PP attendance of 86.1% against national PP attendance of 92.3%. Councillors agreed, commenting that they always reviewed against national data.</p>	
8.2.4	<p>Discussion followed on attendance strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BT reported a year-to-date attendance of 91.4%,</li> <li>• Registers closing at 9:10 am has been identified as a factor affecting attendance.</li> <li>• Additional issues discussed included transport delays; the local tunnel had flooded causing delays, with students stuck on the buses.</li> <li>• Broken weeks have been identified as a significant issue affecting attendance.</li> </ul> <p>Actions being taken were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to communicate the importance of regular attendance to families.</li> <li>• Focus on reducing late arrivals. This includes measures to ensure students enter the school gates quickly and a check on the situation at Lidl was conducted.</li> <li>• Focus on targeted interventions for PP students to close the attendance gap.</li> </ul>	
8.3	<b>Numbers on role</b>	
8.3.1	<p>BT reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current number on role is just under 1000 students, which is over the Planned Admission Number (PAN). This number of students is appropriate for the building capacity, considering the corridor space. A 'left is best' policy has been successfully implemented to manage corridor traffic and avoid pinch points.</li> <li>• There is a waiting list for different year groups.</li> <li>• An advertisement is currently out for a Level 2 administrator to improve data accuracy on Bromcom.</li> </ul>	
8.3.2	<p><b>Why is there such a low English as an Additional Language (EAL) cohort in Year 8 compared to other year groups?</b></p> <p>We believe the data may not be accurate on Bromcom and are currently advertising for an administrator to tighten up the data on Bromcom. EAL in Year 8 will be a focus.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION: BT to report update on accurate data re number of EAL students in Year 8 at next meeting.</u></b></p>	BT

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8.4	<b>Behaviour/Suspensions</b>	
8.4.1	<b>Is 'safe hands' having an impact on behaviour this year?</b> Yes, there are a lot less serious issues since 'safe hands'; we can see a clear difference in the corridors. The next focus will be on quieter corridors. Behaviour in lessons is good but lesson transitions still need improvement.	
8.4.2	<b>How do we measure how safe students feel in the corridors as this would show that it is having an impact?</b> Using student questionnaires to get an idea of how students feel in our corridors. We know from discussions but will aim to get this in number format.	
8.4.3	<b>Have we completed an analysis of the Local Authority Healthy Schools student voice survey to see how CAB students responded compared to other schools?</b> There was an issue on food/low amounts of vegetables/fruit consumed, but nothing that relates directly to safe hands policy.	
8.4.4	<b>Our suspensions compare favourably to other Bristol schools but are still three times as much as national average. Why are our suspensions high?</b> Behaviour is improving overall with the use of the Behaviour Policy. Term 1 is expected to see higher suspension rates than last year. Students returned with quite challenging behaviour, including a spike in racist incidents, possibly influenced by summer events. Individualised support is being provided to some students, and the "Reset" initiative for Year 7s has been effective in settling them. Year 7 is the most capable year group in terms of reading abilities, though some students exhibit challenging behaviours as reported by primary schools.	
8.4.5	<b>SEND suspensions are at 35% which seems to be a lot higher than other groups. How much does the specialist SEND team get involved?</b> BT One Check involves conducting a safeguarding check and a SEND check to ensure students are not suspended without adequate support. There has been a reduction in suspensions of students with EHCPs, although the overall suspension rate remains too high. Efforts are ongoing to ensure that suspensions are not due to unmet needs.	
8.4.6	<b>If a student is in care and has a SEND profile, are they in both sets of data?</b> Yes, they will show in both. We try our best not to suspend a Child in Care, ensuring we understand their individual needs.	
9.3	<b>Children in Care Annual Reports</b>	
9.3.1	Councillors noted the Annual CIC Report 23-24 which had been shared. RP said it is positive that link visits are happening, the processes are now in place and the policy has been updated. RP reported that Personal Education Plans (PEPs) were rated as good.	
9.4	<b>Finances</b>	
9.4.1	<b>How was the budget at the end of last year?</b> The budget met with business rules however due to late revenue last year, there was an underspend, resulting in additional funds being allocated to CLF reserves. TS is supporting us to submit a bid to for reserve funds to repair the sports hall roof.	
9.4.2	<b>Does it impact on this year's budget?</b> There is no impact on this year's budget.	
9.4.3	BT reported that a new Finance Manager for CAB had been in place since January.	
10	<b>Safeguarding</b>	
10.1	<i>The Safeguarding Annual Report 23-24, Term 1 Report and Safeguarding Link Visit Report had been shared.</i> RP highlighted from end of last year	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link visits with Caroline (DSL) are very productive . She feels she now has a full complement of staff and can now be strategic and work on systems– really positive.</li> <li>• Child on child incidents – numbers improving , going in the right direction</li> <li>• Racist and bullying incidents slightly up – sometimes about staff/students understanding systems and what to report. Cannot tell if increases are due to better reporting or a real rise.</li> <li>• Used critical incident plan recently, pleased with recording and following the plan was useful.</li> <li>• Areas we were concerned about were increase in mental health referrals – this is a national trend.</li> <li>• Children in Care (CiC) – the new lead for CiC and has now completed the Annual Report.</li> <li>• E-Safety – a new strategic group were looking at that – RP will report back on this next time.</li> </ul>	
10.2	The Safeguarding Annual Report was noted and agreed by Academy Councillors.	
	Health & Safety H&S Committee meet regularly. Councillors noted outstanding judgement.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
11.1	Academy Councillors <b>noted</b> the updated Academy Attendance Policy and Safeguarding Policies. RP will feed back some concerns on the template Safeguarding Policy to CLF.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC</b>	
12.1	None.	
<b>13</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
13.1	None	

The meeting closed at 6.55pm

**Meetings: Wednesdays 5.00 – 7.00 pm at CLF Institute**

CAB			
AC1	Wed	25-Sep-2024	5-8pm
AC2	Wed	21-Oct-2024	5 -7pm
AC3	Wed	4-Dec-2024	5 -7pm
AC4	Wed	5-Feb-2025	5 -7pm
AC5	Wed	23-Apr-2025	5 -7pm
AC6	Wed	18-Jun-2025	5 -7pm