

Minutes – Minerva Primary Academy Council

Issue Date: 1 October 2024
Location: Minerva Primary Academy
Time: 18:00

Bridget Sutters (BS)	Sponsor Councillor - Chair
Clare Westbury (CW)	Support Staff Councillor
<i>Vacancy</i>	Sponsor Councillor
<i>Vacancy</i>	Parent Councillor
James Shephard (JShe)	Sponsor Councillor (joined the meeting at 6.15pm)
Patricia Fry (PF)	Sponsor Councillor
Alison Levinge (AL)	Sponsor Councillor
Mark Powell (MP)	Parent Councillor

In Attendance: Jennifer Harvey (JH) Principal
 Jen Shaw (JSha) Vice Principal
 Kate Richardson (KR) Education Director
 Danielle Cohen (DC) Sue Observing pending re-appointment
 Burns (SB) Clerk

Absent Sophie Pring (SP) Teacher

1	Introductions and Welcome	
1.2	BS welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
1.3	Apologies were received and accepted for Sophie Pring.	
1a	Declarations of Interest	
	The Academy Councillors confirmed that they had no change to their declarations.	
2	Academy Council	
2.1	Danielle Cohen Term of Office ended on 28.09.2024 Alison Levinge's Term of Office will end on 18.11.2024 Claire Westbury's Term of Office will end on 19.10.2024	
2.2	The Academy Councillors discussed the following to link roles and concluded they would fill them at the next meeting: Disadvantaged, PP & Attendance Link Role. Outdoor Play and Learning Charity will support us with outdoor play experiences. (One of their requirements is an AC to attend some meetings.)	
2.3	The Academy Councillors noted that Ella Gibson has been appointed as the Assistant Principal with SENCo responsibilities today, following a robust recruitment process.	

2.4	On 18 October at 2.30pm there's a Black History Presentation. All the Academy Councillors were invited to attend.	
3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting (16 th July 2024) were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed electronically by the Chair.	
4	Actions and Matters Arising	
4.1	JH to bring some examples of greater depth writing to the next AC meeting – Carried forward.	
5	Academy Council Report	
5.1	<p>Has there been a positive start to the new school year? How are the new members of staff settling in?</p> <p>The vast majority of children have had a very positive start. The new members of staff have had some challenges (e.g. first teaching role), but we offered a strong induction, and they've indicated that they already feel part of the team. We supported some families with additional transition. There are three children who found school challenging before the summer and having a break over the summer meant that it continues to be challenging for them to return to school. The team are working to support their needs.</p>	
5.2	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
5.3	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
5.4	<p>How is the suspension conveyed to the child?</p> <p>Some children are reflective and can be part of the meeting, other children may not be mature enough to engage or understand, but we support them to do so wherever possible.</p>	
5.5	<p>Is the child who cannot be located still on role and affecting attendance figures?</p> <p>We have to wait for 20 days to pass and then the LA will remove them from role.</p>	
5.6	<p>Do you feel confident that you will close the attendance gap between PP and non-PP children. Have you any new strategies to try?</p> <p>We have very high expectations and aspirations to close the attendance gap. We made gains last year in reducing the gap and aim to continue to do so. We</p>	



	will continue the strategies that had impact. We've also introduced a spotlight on a child in our staff weekly bulletin.	
5.7	<p>Are you happy that the Single Central record is up to date.</p> <p>The SCR has been checked and is regularly monitored. We are chasing staff who need to complete their Nimble training. We have captured our peripatetic music teachers to ensure they are on the SCR. Bridget Suitters has also checked the SCR this evening.</p>	
5.8	<p>Have the two children who have returned to Minerva due to lack of specialist setting places, settled, and what additional support are they getting?</p> <p>They are mainly based in the classroom but with bespoke provision to meet their needs. There are two other children with EHCPs, one of them the parents have elected to home educate, the second family have been complimentary about the provision here but recognize that she needs a specialist provision.</p>	
5.9	<p>Are all curriculum leaders strong and is there any development needed. Are there any subjects without a lead?</p> <p>There is no subject without a lead. I'm continuing to cover EDI until Laura returns from maternity leave. One member of staff is new to Leadership but is leading their subject well because they are passionate about the subject. Some of the leaders are part of the CLF network which they find really supportive.</p>	
5.10	<p>Does the Academy choose which language is taught?</p> <p>Across the Trust the primary school's are teaching French or Spanish. We chose Spanish originally because we had several staff who spoke it fluently.</p>	
5.11	<p>What were the key themes for last week's ARV? What was positive from the feedback and what still needs a focus?</p> <p>There was lots of positive feedback. They focused on oracy, supporting learners with disadvantage, and how sequencing and adaptation supports learning for all. The oracy was strong throughout the school because we support staff with oracy strategies and tactics which we model for staff to take into the classrooms which has been very impactful.</p> <p>Next steps will include the Talk Tuesday and Talk Thursday assemblies being prioritized. Subject-specific vocabulary and sentence stems are key. Routines are explicitly taught to the children and staff which ensures that learning takes place quickly on entry to the classroom. This was recognized by the ARV, but we will continue to embed the routines to ensure that no learning time is lost. We will review the geography sequencing and make adaptations to resources and visuals. Subject knowledge at times is not as strong as in other subjects so we are supporting staff with that. The network meetings allow access to Secondary Teachers who can support with some of the geography concepts. We are also looking at PE adaptations and considering the space we use for this provision given the number of children in the class and any needs they have.</p>	
5.12	<p>What is behaviour like during lunchtime play?</p> <p>We've improved playtimes and introduced additional resources and activities. The dining hall remains noisy, and we need to focus on the transition of year</p>	



	<p>groups in and out of the dining hall. There has been a reduction of playground injuries and incidents following the introduction of staggered sittings.</p> <p>Having eaten in the canteen, I observed that if children didn't recognize the food or the name of the food, they wouldn't eat it. This resulted in low-level behaviours in the afternoon. Therefore, I'm going to meet with the canteen staff to discuss some tweaks to the menu.</p>	
5.13	[REDACTED]	
5.14	[REDACTED]	
5.15	<p>How did the weeks' 'in the learning' go and what improvements need to be made?</p> <p>The ARV is arranged for the 'in the learning' week. We've shared general themes and then individual feedback for individual teachers who may require support. Some staff are new to the school but are experienced and other staff are new to teaching.</p>	
5.16	<p>Year 6 has a high percentage of PP children (52%). Is this a concern for Year 6 outcomes at the end of school year?</p> <p>Our Y6 cohorts have on average been at about 50% for the last five years so we are familiar with this. Our first mock takes place next week which will serve as a useful benchmark. Our Y6 teachers interacted with the children in Y5 which helped them plan for their new cohort.</p>	
5.17	<p>What are the consequences for having a surplus which is below the original approved budget and not meeting business rules? Are you concerned about the financial position for the school year?</p> <p>We have to finish the financial year with a surplus.</p> <p>To meet business rules, we needed to achieve £22k surplus. We were just below that amount.</p> <p>The census takes place on Thursday which will determine the amount of funding we receive next academic year. This is a concern because we only have one Reception class due to falling birth rates.</p>	

5.18	<p>Are you concerned re changes to SEND top-up funding and not being able to apply for funding until a child has an EHP which is taking a long time to process?</p> <p>For children who have the highest need and require a specialist setting, the length of time to achieve an EHCP has increased dramatically due to LA failings. We've been proactive about identifying need and undertaking plan, do and review.</p>	
5.19	<p>Can you explain the new criteria re top up?</p> <p>We can't apply for funding for any other child who is significantly behind their peers or has complex needs which will be very challenging. We are liaising with the Early Years team and have bought into some speech and language software to make early identification easier.</p>	
5.20	<p>Why do you think the number of minor accidents was much higher for year 2 pupils last school year?</p> <p>There are higher levels of SEND need in that cohort.</p>	
5.21	<p>Did you want to highlight anything in the AIP?</p> <p>There are four key areas in the AIP and we've spaced out the actions throughout the year.</p>	
6	Policies	
6.1	<p>Policies to Note:</p> <p>None.</p>	
7	Matters for the attention of the Board	
7.1	None.	
8	Governance	
8.1	All the Academy Councillors were reminded to complete their declarations on Governorhub and their Safeguarding Training.	
9	AOB	
9.1	None	
10	Close of Meeting	
10.1	The meeting ended at 7.30pm	