

# Minutes – Minerva Primary Academy Council

**Issue Date:** 29 January 2024  
**Location:** Minerva Primary Academy  
**Time:** 18:00 – 20:00

Bridget Sutters (BS)	Sponsor Councillor - Chair
Jen Shaw (JSha)	Student Advocate & VP
Clare Westbury (CW)	Support Staff Councillor
Jennifer Harvey (JH)	Principal
James Shephard (JShe)	Parent Councillor ( <i>joined via Teams</i> )
Sophie Pring (SP)	Teacher
Patricia Fry (PF)	LA Rep
Alison Levinge (AL)	Sponsor Councillor
Kate Richardson (KR)	Education Director ( <i>left at 7.00pm</i> )
Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk

**Apologies:** Danielle Cohen (DC) Sponsor Councillor  
Mark Powell (MP) Parent Councillor

<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions and Welcome</b>	
1.2	BS welcomed all the attendees and introductions were made.	
1.3	Apologies were received and accepted for; Danielle Cohen and Mark Powell	
<b>1a</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
1.4	The Academy Councillors confirmed that they had no change to their declarations.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Academy Council</b>	
	A Parent Academy Council election will be arranged this term.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting (21 <sup>st</sup> November 2023) were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed electronically by the Chair.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Actions and Matters Arising</b>	
4.1	None.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Academy Council Report</b>	
5.1	<p><b>How is staff morale and how are you both feeling now that your Assistant Principal has started maternity leave?</b></p> <p>We've been planning for her maternity leave for a long time and the SENCo is out of class which adds capacity to the areas that she's leading on. The</p>	

	distribution of Sarah's role has been undertaken with thought and has gone well. I continue to support with EDI in the short term.	
5.2	<p><b>How is the preparation for SATS going for Y6? Are there any concerns?</b></p> <p>We are currently in another round of mocks. They have been very useful to quality assure what we predict the children will achieve. Outcomes are improving and appear stronger compared to the same time last year. We have had a few children leave and some new children start. We have a strong team in Y6 who work well together. We have identified what additional access arrangements some children may need.</p> <p>We had a strategic pupil progress meeting across the Y6 cohort to determine who would be best placed to provide support.</p>	
5.3	<p><b>Do you feel Y1 are on track with phonics?</b></p> <p>We carried out Phonics screening in the first week and were able to determine where the gaps are. The Y1 children are in a good place and the cohort is quite small. We have had some children join Y1. We have case studies for children who join us with little English but still achieve their Phonics screening in Y2.</p> <p>I attended professional development with the English Hub re Phonics. Our whole team are trained in Phonics provision because reading is the gateway to learning.</p> <p>As early reading is so important, if we have supply cover, we aim to ensure a trained MPA colleague teaches phonics.</p>	
5.4	<p><b>How are you ensuring that the lowest 20% of children are read with regularly?</b></p> <p>We've identified pupils via data and pupil progress meetings. The literacy lead has been driving the strategy that allows time in the day for adults to read with these children. Phonics and reading is a priority and therefore our teachers provide Phonics lessons where required in KS2. In Reception, the lowest 20% of children are supported by the teacher.</p>	
5.5	<p><b>Do you have volunteers come into school and listen to reading?</b></p> <p>Yes, and we have a video on our website to support volunteers and parents with how to read with children.</p>	
5.6	<p><b>I'm glad to see the improvement in pupil attendance continues. Which measures have contributed to that?</b></p> <p>We have made it very clear to staff and parents why attendance is so important. Attendance is everyone's responsibility. We celebrate good attendance and attendance improvements, and we share best practice to try to improve others attendance. The staff know the children well and therefore how to encourage them to come into school by making learning irresistible. We challenge low attendance and will pursue legal proceedings where required.</p>	
5.7	<p><b>Have you any more thoughts on how you communicate with parents of EAL children?</b></p> <p>We have written our Communication Policy and have ensured that the team have the 'Say Hello' app on their ipads. Our families know that we can translate when required. Attendance for our EAL families tends to be stronger. We use an interpreter where required, e.g. if a safeguarding conversation required.</p>	

5.8		
5.9	<p><b>What are the next steps for EYFS as it is in a much stronger position than it has ever been?</b></p> <p>We have an implementation cycle and things are in a strong place now. We've made strong appointments who have a shared vision. Now we need to focus on sustaining our improvements. This is the third year that we've had complex SEND need children join us, therefore we have sourced training from the LA which has been well received.</p>	
5.10	<p><b>Are you still working towards the Bristol Standard?</b></p> <p>Yes, we have completed two of the four dimensions and have submitted the other two. It is a reflective process.</p>	
5.11	<p><b>Positive handling is still high, how does this effect other children?</b></p> <p>We are proactive in terms of verbal de-escalation and physical intervention. If we have to put hands on a child to keep them or others safe, then we have a debrief with the class about being safe and respecting learning. We have a Positive Handling Plan for children who need them in advance so that the parents and child know what to expect. In the rare incident where we've not had a plan in place, we have spoken to the child afterwards to ensure they understand. Two of the children are placed at The Nest, therefore the number of incidents has reduced.</p>	
5.12	<p><b>Do you feel children will be able to talk to OFSTED confidently about their personal development?</b></p> <p>If adults talk to the children about the curriculum and enrichment, then they can be quite articulate. Our Pupil Voice groups are experienced in speaking confidently.</p>	
5.13	<p><b>Were you disappointed with result of the safeguarding audit - 77%?</b></p> <p>Yes, because I have high expectations. I recognize that we have improved from last year and there were 215 things to evidence. One member of staff who started the day before the audit and therefore haven't had time to complete their safeguarding training. It was a useful process and we've already closed several things down.</p>	
5.14	<p><b>Will the DSL be responsible for the actions?</b></p> <p>No, the actions are shared across the safeguarding team and the actions are all recorded on our strategic safeguarding action plan sheet.</p>	
5.15	<p><b>From the audit how will you evidence that vulnerable students' academic progress is evidenced as being monitored as this is something the school does well?</b></p> <p>As a leader I am aware of the processes we use and how to access data for the vulnerable student cohort. I will convey this information to the DSL because we are evidencing this, but on the day, she was not able to articulate the answer to the question.</p>	
5.16	<p><b>I thought that 'child on child' had its own category and wasn't recorded as bullying on CPOMS?</b></p> <p>It does. But we needed to remove the 'bullying' category which has now been done.</p>	



5.17	<p><b>Are you pleased with how the SENCO and DSL are settling into their new roles and what are you doing to ensure that they are confident when talking to Ofsted?</b></p> <p>The DSL would be accompanied into a meeting and the SENCo is going to liaise with Susie Weaver to rehearse some conversations to build her confidence. She is engaging well with professional development offered in the Trust and she has her SENCo qualification.</p>	
5.18	<p><b>It is pleasing that the ARV was positive. Is there any learning from it?</b></p> <p>There is always something to learn. We made the process part of the learning week where there are lots of lesson drop-ins and a strong induction for our new staff. The ARV highlighted that we provide good support for our lowest 20% of readers but it could be improved. Also, that writing support needs to be in place for lower years and not just predominantly in Y5 and Y6.</p>	
5.19	<p><b>Scrutiny didn't highlight any concerns but what will you action from the recommendations?</b></p> <p>Attendance will remain a focus. Sustaining progress in EYFS is a theme. A strong induction for our SENCo will be a priority as well as supporting our newer colleagues. The formative assessment of foundation subjects is on our Academy Improvement Plan and continues to improve. <i>(Kate Richardson left the meeting at 7.00pm)</i></p>	
5.20	<p><b>Any thoughts on the reduced numbers of children in pre-school, Reception and Y1 and what can be done to increase numbers?</b></p> <p>We've had a conversation in a leadership meeting about this. Our numbers in Reception and Y1 have increased since September. We have asked out pre-school families what we can do better and have explored 30 hour provision but recruitment is challenging. Parents want all-year round provision, but teachers' pay and conditions won't permit this. The parents want longer hours which we explored but cannot provide. [REDACTED]</p>	
5.21	<p><b>Has the notice in the reception area that reminds parents/visitors of expected behaviour had an impact?</b></p> <p>We've not had any aggressive incidents in person this term, although we did have one aggressive phone call.</p>	
5.22	<p><b>A drainpipe on the left of the entrance has been blocked for a long time. Is there a proactive maintenance schedule in place?</b></p> <p>We have a H&amp;S Central Team who make regular checks and we contract work to external agencies. Jo Rodman will be at the H&amp;S Committee meeting next week.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
6.1	<p>Policies to Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLF Complaints.</li> </ul> <p>Policies to Approve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Policy</li> </ul> <p><b>Is there an anonymous way for parents to communicate?</b></p> <p>The parent survey is anonymous. If they provide their contact details, then we do follow up with them.</p>	

	<p><b>How many languages are spoken in the Academy?</b> Possibly as many as twenty? The languages are also quite transient and the predominant language after English changes every year.</p> <p><i>The Academy Council approved the Communications Policy subject to grammatical amendments.</i></p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Matters for the attention of the Board</b>	
7.1	None.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
8.1	<p><b><u>PEX Hearings</u></b> AL has attended several PEX Hearings and COAC have discussed the fact that the LA has not attended the PEX Hearings, and that the threshold for support by external agencies is too high.</p>	
8.2	<p><b><u>Fundraising</u></b> Many staff are undertaking individual challenges to raise funds and we've recently had a very successful Bake-Off competition.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Close of Meeting</b>	
	The meeting ended at 7.30pm	