



Minerva Academy Council Meeting Minutes
14th July 2020 at 6.00pm
Virtual meeting via TEAMS due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Members:

Nicky McAllister (NM)	Sponsor 1	Jenny Harvey (JH) (Interim Principal)	Teacher
VACANCY	Sponsor 2	Donna Goodhind (DG) *	Support Staff
Bridget Suitters (BS) - Chair	Sponsor 3	Lily Wright (LW)	Student Advocate
VACANCY	Sponsor 4	Anna Keen (AK) *	LA Rep
Pete Franklin (PF) *	Sponsor 5	VACANCY	Parent 1
Kate Richardson (KR)	Executive Principal	Shuyara Chowdhury (SC)	Parent 2
VACANCY	Principal	Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk
*	<i>Indicates absent from meeting</i>		<i>Indicates question asked</i>

1, Introduction, Administration, and Apologies

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm

Apologies were received and accepted for: AK, DG and PF

The meeting was deemed to be quorate.

LW advised in advance of the meeting that she would be late and joined at 6.30pm.

2, Declarations of interest

The Academy Councillors confirmed that they had no pecuniary interests pertinent to this meeting.

3, Minutes of Previous Meeting (4th May 2020)

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

4, Actions and Matters Arising

C/F T2, BS to request at COAC that a staff questionnaire is re-issued, and to ask for a strengthened Administration of Medicines Policy – **Carried forward.**

C/F 5, PH to confirm the diversity of the parents who are engaging with the school – **Closed.**

Parents are not permitted in the building with the current risk assessment.

8, PH to investigate the drafting of a Lettings Policy and whether the Trust could be charged for using space in the academy – **Carried forward.**

8, JH to reconfirm Team Leaders for staff during pandemic – **Completed. Team Leaders had different methods of communicating with their teams.**

Matters Arising

Pete Hallam has stepped down as Principal.

The Academy Council thanked Pete for his support for the staff, parents and children whilst he was the Principal of Minerva and for overseeing the building of the new school and the transition of the pupils and staff to the new site.

The Academy Council thanked Jenny Harvey (Vice Principal) who has stepped up as the Interim Principal. The Academy Council advised that they were confident that Jenny would do an outstanding job as Interim Principal and congratulated her on her calm and confident leadership during the significantly challenging circumstances created by Covid-19.

5, Academy Council Report

Paper circulated in advance

How have children and staff responded to the new school day in school?

Everyone has embraced the change. There was some initial anxiety about returning, but this was mitigated with robust communication about what the arrangements would be. Children and staff have been resilient and are pleased to be back on site.

Staff have embraced distance learning and have ensured that all children have received quality teaching whether they are on site or at home.

Nineteen members of staff completed the recent staff survey. The results were very positive and indicated that staff felt that their wellbeing had been well catered for.

How many children are on site?

Just over 100.

What are the arrangements for September?

We are currently using staggered starts, staggered lunchtimes and staggered collection time. We are teaching about hygiene, and the playground has been split into zones to allow as much outdoor learning as possible. Signage is all around the school recommending two-metres distancing which we will maintain in September. Children within a bubble will not need to socially distance.

Communication has gone out to parents advising which entrance they are to use and at what time. We have asked children to bring their own water bottles and children will eat their dinners in the classroom.

Are the bubbles classes or year groups?

In EYFS and Y1 the bubbles will be classes as the learning takes place across classrooms. Y2 is a whole year-group bubble but most learning will take place separately in the two classrooms. In KS2 all classes will be a bubble.

Are you confident with the bubble arrangement?

Yes, we are very confident that the risks have been identified and have been mitigated for appropriately. We regularly review the risk assessment.

Have you had any cases?

No. We have had some suspected cases, but they all tested negative.

What support is in place for the current Y6 and how confident are you that they will have a smooth transition to Y7?

Y6 have received most of the transition opportunities that are available. All the secondary schools have had handover information and lots of details about what has been covered in the curriculum before lockdown, and where the gaps are. We made the decision not to introduce any new learning at distance and concentrated on consolidation. Today all the students had a really positive transition experience to BBA and met key members of staff.

All the secondary schools have provided FAQs, virtual introductions to staff and virtual building tours. All the Y6 pupils have been able to make their year book and purchase a leavers jumper and the CLF have provided a book for each Y6 child to read in preparation of Y7. We have provided key contacts for the secondary schools if they find that any of the Y6 children struggle to settle.

Are all the pupils going to CLF secondary schools?

No, a small number are going to non-CLF secondary schools, but we have supported their transition too.

Which CLF secondary schools are the children going to?

The majority are going to BBA and BMA, with a few going to JCA and CAB.

Have parents continued to support home schooling as time has gone on?

Yes, the parents are very supportive and engaged. In Y5 and Y6 engagement was slightly lower so we introduced live lessons which has increased the level of engagement. Maths with parents have been very popular with over 400 lessons accessed. Work is being uploaded on a weekly basis and children are accessing the MPA Wellbeing site.

The teachers have graded the level of engagement to identify which children may require additional support in September.

Have the CLF supported the teachers with live lessons?

The MPA Middle Leaders have championed the live lessons and have shared their learning and all their resources across the trust which has been really impactful.

September and the months ahead will be challenging. What support has been offered from the Central Team?

The Central Team have been very supportive, right from the beginning and I have never had to make a decision in isolation. The Central Team have distilled the Government's daily briefings to align with the trust's guiding principles and HEART values. The H&S advisor have been flexible and available to support with enacting the risk assessment and ensuring that all the risks are mitigated. There is a lot of expertise in the trust which has helped enormously with this unprecedented situation.

How are you ensuring that there will be high expectations in September?

I have met with the wider SLT to agree expectations. There are two inset days at the beginning of term where we will set expectations with the staff, review the AIP priorities for the year and embed the recovery curriculum. I have focused on developing the wider leadership and empowering them to take on additional responsibility so that from September everyone will take ownership of high expectations and challenge where they are not in place consistently.

Is wellbeing going to be the number one priority?

Wellbeing is of paramount importance and we have supported staff to understand that every child's experience will be different. Returning to school is what many children need but some of them may find it challenging.

Can you talk us through the recovery plan?

The recovery curriculum has three phases. First, we need to ensure that the children feel safe and settled in their bubble and understand the new expectations and routines. The next phase is to recognise the loss that the children have experienced and talk about how they feel and their emotions. The third part of the plan is engagement. We know from experience of the children on site that some children move through the phases quickly, but other children need longer and therefore our Pastoral Team and Thrive practitioners will provide additional support. We will also introduce play sessions for

those individuals who require tailored support. It is important that we do not hold back the children who are ready to engage and begin learning.

Who is the identified member of staff for overseeing Mental Health, and what training have they received?

Our mental health leads will support the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and children within the academy. We have Cath Archer who has been identified as the Wellbeing Support and she has been accessing training; her focus has been children's wellbeing. Next year Krysa Haslewood will be the Staff Wellbeing Lead and she will share resources and signpost staff to external agencies e.g. the employee assistance programme. There is a CLF role description for this role and a CLF Wellbeing network which both members of staff have attended. Working closely as a trust has been very reassuring and supportive for the staff and good health and wellbeing has been promoted across the trust.

Do we have an indication of the number of parents who might not want their children to return in September? How will you manage this?

We have had regular contact with families to check their wellbeing and have been able to gauge who may need additional support when returning to school. No families have refused to return, and we have been very proactive about communicating with parents. Vulnerable families and SEND families have been provided with additional guidance and we have translated communication into other languages and used a translator where necessary. We have issued a parent questionnaire to capture any concerns so that we can address them before September.

What are the Reception numbers for next year?

59 children currently, but we are anticipating being full. Transition of Nursery children and induction materials have been produced to support new families. We also have a new Y4 and Y6 child starting in September.

Are there any staff anxious about returning to school? How will you manage this?

We have been contacting staff regularly and are aware of which staff are anxious about returning. We have provided training PowerPoints and undertaken individual risk assessments and have encouraged staff to visit before the summer to familiarise themselves with the site arrangements.

How will you ensure school attendance doesn't dip again after all the hard work that went on before Covid-19?

The expectations are the same and they have been shared with the new families and reiterated with our current families. We will continue to use the tiered approach to attendance and ensure that the approach is embedded.

Is there sufficient capacity in place to support you as the Interim Principal?

I feel very supported despite missing a member of SLT. Kate Richardson has been providing additional capacity which has been very helpful. We are well prepared for September and there are a lot of individuals across the trust who I can approach if I need help or to collaborate with.

Has the academy thought about how they will apply for /spend any government funding available for catch up?

The funding being talked about by the government has not been finalised. Once we have clear guidance the best way to use it to support children will be discussed at executive level and then shared with principals and then their teams to discuss. We need to determine what the needs of our children are when they return. Historically we have found that using staff that the children are

familiar with is more impactful than using agency staff. We have some staff who are coming to the end of their fixed-term contracts so there may be an opportunity to utilise them.

Could a second teacher be appointed in larger year groups?

With the rules around funding academies have to ensure that if we employ another teacher in our larger Y5 class we have the funds to sustain over the following 3 years. The government funding is likely to only be for one year and how much it is not currently clear or what it can be spent on.

Will finances go back to individual schools in September or will it stay with Trust?

Budgets have been set for the new financial year and the finances will return to MPA. We have had complete ownership of the budget and the Central Finance Team ensure that it is compliant.

Racism has been a central theme this term. Have the children who are not on site had an opportunity to take part in any discussion /activity as a result of Black Lives Matter?

All children on site have received a BLM assembly and discussions. We have shared items in the home newsletters and the KS2 Classes have had live lessons and distance learning. Every week we have assemblies based on British Values and we have an EDI framework. We have purchased additional books and resources to represent our diverse families and multilingual books have been ordered. The children have been very engaged with the discussion and very insightful. KS1 have shared in-school learning via Class Dojo.

Will all SLT and staff get a well-deserved break over the summer?

Yes, all the staff will have the opportunity to have a break so that they can return refreshed and reinvigorated for next year. The CLF have provided 'five ways to wind down' and additional wellbeing resources are being provided this week as part of wellbeing support.

What will be delivered at the Inset days before school starts and will this be the first time since school closed that all the staff will be in school together?

We will be setting expectations, embracing our response curriculum, and building on our immersive CLF curriculum and understanding states of being. Curriculum Leads will map out their links to the AIP and we will ensure that staff are aware of the wellbeing support available.

Anna Keen has provided some statistics about the Hillfields Estate so that we can better understand the context of the school and do some myth-busting.

It will be lovely to have all the staff back on site together again and they will be encouraged to eat their lunch together (in a socially distanced fashion).

6, Governance

The Parent Councillor vacancy has been advertised in the parent newsletter and additional individuals are being approached for the Sponsor vacancies.

7, School Council Update

N/A.

8, Safeguarding

BS has been having monthly Safeguarding calls with Jess and is very impressed with the level of safeguarding process that have being robustly undertaken during lockdown. BS will be visiting MPA on Friday for a Safeguarding handover.

9, Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC

None.

10, Policies that require review

- Data Protection Policy for Staff
- Records Retention Policy
- Information Security Policy for Staff
- MPA Accessibility Policy

The Academy Councillors noted the above CLF policies.

11, AOB

The Academy Councillors thanked Jenny and all the staff for their hard work and resilience, and for responding so flexibly to an ever changing and challenging situation.

The Academy Councillors thanked BS for her support as Chair and for regularly visiting the school and staff during over the last year and during lockdown.

ACTION: BS to write to all staff and thank them on behalf of the Academy Council.

12, Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 6th October 2020, 6.00pm.

Meeting ended at: 7.25pm

ITEM	ACTION	INITIALS
C/F T2	BS to request at COAC that a staff questionnaire is re-issued, and to ask for a strengthened Administration of Medicines Policy	BS
C/F T5	8, JH to investigate the drafting of a Lettings Policy and whether the Trust could be charged for using space in the academy	JH
10	BS to write to all staff and thank them on behalf of the Academy Council.	BS

Signed by Chair: _____ Date: _____