



Minerva Academy Council Meeting Minutes 8th October 2019 at 6.00pm

Members:

Nicky McAllister (NM)	Sponsor 1	Jenny Harvey (JH) (Vice Principal)	Teacher
Hannah Ward (HW)	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	Thareem Naz (TN)	Parent 1
Kate Richardson (KR)	Executive Principal	Shuyara Chowdhury (SC)	Parent 2
Pete Hallam (PH)	Principal	Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk
*	<i>Indicates absent from meeting</i>		Indicates question asked

The Academy Council met before the meeting (without the Principal and Vice Principal), to review the papers, discuss lines of enquiry and identify trends. The Councillors expressed concern and frustration at not being able to access papers via TEAMS.

1, Jess Crossley – Parent Support Worker/DSL – Raising Awareness of FGM in the School.

The CLF undertake a Safeguarding audit annually. Last year's audit indicated that raising awareness of FGM amongst students could be increased. This is a sensitive topic and therefore a lot of work has taken place in the LA about how this should be approached with families. There is a Risk Assessment and online tool that can be used to assess risk. We used this tool three times last year and on each occasion, it resulted in Risk being low, but it was a useful process.

Secondary Schools have specific PSHE lesson plans for FGM but primary school children are often not prepared for this. We have been working with an external agency to use their Y6 age appropriate PSHE lesson plans. Online videos are also available that the children can watch. We have safeguarding posters in the adult toilets and could use appropriate posters in the children's toilets as part of preparing the school for the new lessons. We are now bringing this initiative to the Academy Council to seek agreement to use these lesson plans in Y6.

How will you ensure that the message is delivered sensitively?

It will only be for Y6. We could deliver the lesson initially to the girls only, and then to girls and boys, depending on the teacher's feedback and their recommendations.

Have you liaised with Henry Chan (LA Safeguarding Lead)?

Yes, there has been a lot of consultation between the LA and key communities.

ACTION: BS (Safeguarding Lead) to meet with Jess Crossley and review the FGM posters and lesson plans.

2, Introduction, Administration, and Apologies

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm
Apologies were received and accepted for LW.
The meeting was deemed to be quorate.

3, Declarations of interest & KCSIE

The Academy Council submitted a new pecuniary interest form for the year and signed to confirm they had read and understood the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019 version).

4, Minutes of Previous Meeting (18th July 2019)

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

5, Actions and Matters Arising

Action PH – BS asked PH if it would be possible for AC to have access to The Key which would be a beneficial resource for all – **Completed. The school does not currently subscribe to The Key due to budget constraints.**

Elect Vice Chair.

A Vice Chair will be elected at the next Academy Council meeting.

6, Academy Council Report

What have the reactions to the school playground been?

The children are delighted with the additional space. There are different heights and materials to play with already, even though only one third has been completed.

Some of the parents were concerned about the size of the sandpit?

The size of the sandpit allows for lots of imaginative play. There have been some jovial comments about sand in the school uniform, but no-one has raised any actual concerns. When the sand is very wet, we may cordon off part of the sandpit if necessary. We have spoken to the children about playing appropriately with sand. The benefits outweigh the disadvantages as some children have never experienced sand.

Are the adjacent classrooms impacted by wind blowing the sand into them?

No. However, some logs have now been installed to help contain the sand.

Have there been any additional complaints from the neighbours?

Some residents were concerned about the height of some of the play equipment impacting on their privacy. We are investigating increasing the height of the wall with additional trellis and advised the parents that we would let them know the outcome by the end of October 2019. There have been no further concerns raised.

Is there a cost implication for the additional trellis?

Heidi Clements is investigating the cost and a decision will be made following this information.

ACTION: PH to respond to neighbours' concerns about the height of the playground equipment and indicate the budget impact of installing trellis and the implications of this on education.

How is the outside area being used teachers to enhance opportunities for an exciting curriculum?

We have had a Y6 fire pit and outdoor cooking. Y3 have built volcanoes. Nursery class are doing weekly forest schools and the provision for Early Years has been transformed.

How are the teachers being supported to deliver good quality teaching?

We have changed our monitoring style this year across the Trust. We are spending more time in classrooms discussing pedagogy and supporting teachers with planning. The SLT are being used more for professional development as opposed to monitoring. The staff have been very responsive to this change. This is a more supportive approach that should result in improved teaching and learning. Teachers are identifying their own areas of improvement and are utilising opportunities for peer observations. The staff have been very self-reflective and have identified areas of improvement that the SLT would have chosen. PH and JH have also been covering classes which has given us insight into quality of planning.

How are you going to demonstrate that this change is impacting on progress?

Although we are not making notes during lessons, we are making judgements and are therefore able to identify next steps. We will be monitoring which teachers are achieving their next steps.

How will you be able to determine that the children are making progress in response to the next steps?

As an SLT we will monitor if the quality of teaching and learning is improving. The impact will be demonstrated in the black box data. The Executive Principal meets with the SLT regularly and clear expectations have been set. We have modelled what is expected for the teachers and have provided a timeline about when those expectations should be embedded. This piece of work will indicate if there are any teachers who require additional support. When we had the Academy Review Visit we identified some teaching that required improvement. Some teachers, particularly new staff, were not clear what the expectations were so we are ensuring everyone is now clear first. We are then supporting staff with training, planning and being with them in lessons.

You mentioned "In the learning everyday", are teachers pushing back on the amount of observations, is there a risk that the Unions could object?

These are not summative judgemental observations.

In our school we have worked closely with our staff to set the expectations about what is intended by this process. The process should be collaborative and therefore we are anticipating that the teachers will be open to this process. The culture of teaching expectations has moved on nationally and it is unlikely that the Unions would object.

If the classroom visits are informal, how do you formally follow a capability process?

Expectations need to be made clear first, then support must be put in place before we could consider an informal support plan where the process would be followed.

How are you managing subject leaders and promoting non-core subjects?

Every subject has been assigned to someone who has an interest in that area. They are drafting improvement plans based on intent, implementation and impact. We have allocated time for staff to observe teaching of their subject. At the beginning of term, we focused on reading, writing and maths. At the end of this term we will be introducing subject meetings and the inset days will include subject knowledge and how an enquiry lesson would be taught. The new curriculum expectations are very high and we need to identify subject knowledge gaps. Traditionally mornings have been literacy and numeracy, but Begbrook have been using three-week subject blocks that include all the Maths

and English requirements which is radical and inspiring. We are visiting Begbrook this term to share best practice.

The Academy Review Visit noted that some of the staff are not able to articulate the intent and implementation of their curriculum. Therefore, presenting to the Academy Council would help to empower the middle leaders.

ACTION: PH to draft a subject leads timetable to present at future Academy Council meetings

Ofsted expects all children to remember what has been taught to them and will want to see evidence of this. How will you make sure this is achieved?

We will ask the children ourselves as part of our ongoing monitoring. Mechanisms for this are also being developed across the trust as we adapt our new curriculum while we enact it. We regularly ask pupils about their learning and this will continue with a focus on what has been learnt long term in our curriculum.

In spite of the ongoing hard work of the school, attendance continues to be a challenge. How are you going to ensure attendance achieves at least national average and how are you going to reduce extended periods of leave for identified specific groups.

Attendance has been disappointing this term due to some families not returning to school after the summer break. We have been liaising with the CLF and Behaviour Insight Team to determine as many strategies as possible. We have introduced an even more rigorous whole school strategy and we review attendance weekly. We have made it very clear to all staff that attendance is everyone's responsibility, have produced a rigorous escalation process to follow, and now intervene when attendance drops below 97%. Some parents have been concerned about this, but it has opened up new lines of conversations with parents. Class teachers have spoken to families with attendance that was below the national average last year, and anyone who has already had absences this year.

The AC noted that the attendance to date is 95.7% and that persistent absence has reduced from 19% to 14.5%.

ACTION: AK to recommend that Headteachers write to all clinics to challenge the process of issuing appointments within school hours.

Reading has been identified as an area of weakness across the school. What has been put in place to address this and how will you know that positive outcomes are being achieved?

A whole school action plan has been put in place following analysis of the reading paper. This includes whole school initiatives like precision retrieval and increased vocabulary. VIPERS (Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarise) has been introduced in the school. The Literacy Lead has been investigating the best way to teach reading and has filmed herself as a model for other teachers. Y6 have signed an agreement that they will read at home three times a week and VIPERS has been shared with parents so that they can understand how to support their children. We found that some of our children answered questions in full sentences which was not required in the SATs paper. We are therefore supporting the children with exam techniques. LW is the new Literacy Lead and has been very proactive in looking at how other schools have achieved good progress in reading.

There has been an increase in the number of pupils in Reception?

Yes, we have sixty pupils in reception and therefore we are full.

Are there any financial implications arising from the increase in pupils?

We were concerned about lagged funding as we were being funded for 260 pupils but now have 340 pupils, therefore we made an application to Lord Agnew for growth funding. The application has been accepted and the census data on 5th October 2019 captured 340 pupils. This has enabled us to recruit additional staff and we now have two Y1 teachers. There are no mixed year groups, but we still have single classes in Y4 and Y5.

What percentage of children are using wrap around care?

There are approximately seventeen children in the after school session and up to twenty-seven attending the free breakfast club.

What is the criteria for the free breakfast club?

There isn't one. Children can come in at 8.20am and can purchase a breakfast. From 8.30am onward we provide free bagels which are supplied by Magic Breakfast. Fair Share supplies our tuckshop.

ACTION: PH to provide the next meeting with the Breakfast Club attendance and PP breakdown.

Is there a system in place to remind parents when children's medication is due to expire?

Parents are required to take responsibility by noting the expiry date when they hand the medication in. There is a process in place in school where all medication is checked each week and parents are informed at least seven days in advance if epi pens or inhalers are about to go out of date.

ACTION: PH to update the Medications Policy to indicate that it is the responsibility of parents to note the expiry dates of medication that they supply to the school.

What are you doing as an SLT to embed high expectations across the school?

We have provided a placemat (blueprint) of what staff should expect to see in order to ensure that staff are picking up when something is not as it should be. Staff need to be vigilant in and around the school to ensure that expectations are reinforced.

Have you spoken to parents about uniform?

The class teachers are responsible on following-up on uniform and expectations are set when the children join the school.

Six members of staff left at the end of last year. There has been a lot of change and a lot of new staff, are you confident that staff wellbeing and morale is high?

The link between staff sickness absence and morale is often discussed. HR are supporting us with the pattern of sickness and absence. Some staff have chronic ongoing health issues (two support staff and two teachers) which impacted on our sickness absence rate at the beginning of the year. High absence rates that are sporadic is often mistaken as being morale based. However, the CLF staff questionnaire has not indicated an issue with staff morale in the past, but a questionnaire has not been issued recently. Ian Payne (CLF HR) has remarked on the positive attitude of the staff in the school, so I am not aware of any morale concerns.

ACTION: BS to request at COAC that a staff questionnaire is re-issued, and to ask for a strengthened Administration of Medicines Policy.

How is the Principal job-share working out?

We have settled into a good routine. JH will lead the school on a Monday (unless Scrutiny or ARVs are taking place). Kate Richardson has altered her diary to accommodate the new job share. We have a slightly reduced capacity with no Assistant Principal in post.

When are you recruiting an Assistant Principal?

Interviews are planned for the 22nd and 23rd of October with a start date in January 2020.

Has the PP strategy been amended to three-years?

Yes.

Appointment of Academy Council Link Roles

- Attendance – SC
- Standards & Progress – PF
- H&S - PF
- Safeguarding – BS (with SC shadowing).
- SEND – BS (with TN shadowing).
- LAC – AK
- PP- AK
- Curriculum Deep Dives – AK, HW and DG
- Pupil Conferencing – HW
- Reading – AK, HW

7, Policies

- Nut Free Policy – Carried forward
- Anti-bullying – Carried forward.

8, AOB

Nicky McAllister has been appointed as the Chair of Bristol Brunel Academy Council. The Academy Councillors thanked Nicky for all her support whilst she was the Chair of Minerva Primary Academy Council and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

9, Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 26th November 2019, 6.00pm

ITEM	ACTION	INITIALS
1	BS (Safeguarding Lead) to meet with Jess Crossley and review the FGM posters and lesson plans.	BS
6	PH to respond to neighbours' concerns about the height of the playground equipment and indicate the budget impact of installing trellis and the implications of this on education.	PH
6	PH to draft a subject leads timetable to present at future Academy Council meetings	PH
6	AK to recommend that Headteachers write to all clinics to challenge the process of issuing appointments within school hours.	AK
6	PH to provide the next meeting with the Breakfast Club attendance and PP breakdown.	PH
6	PH to update the Medications Policy to indicate that it is the responsibility of parents to note the expiry dates of medication that they supply to the school.	PH
6	BS to request at COAC that a staff questionnaire is re-issued, and to ask for a strengthened Administration of Medicines Policy.	BS

Signed by Chair: _____ Date: _____