



Minerva Academy Council Meeting Minutes
7th May 2019 at 6.00pm
Venue – New Building

Members:

Nicky McAllister (NM) - (Chair)	Sponsor 1	Jenny Harvey (JH) (Vice Principal)	Teacher
Vacancy	Sponsor 2	Donna Goodhind (DG)	Support Staff
Bridget Suitters (BS)	Sponsor 3	Lily Wright (LW)	Student Advocate
Nithya Prabhakar (NP) *	Sponsor 4	Anna Keen (AK)	LA Rep
Pete Franklin (PF) *	Sponsor 5	Thareem Naz (TN)	Parent 1
Dan Nicholls (DN)	Executive Principal	Shuyara Chowdhury (SC)	Parent 2
Pete Hallam (PH)	Principal	Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk
* Indicates absent from meeting			Indicates question asked

1, The Academy Council met before the meeting (without the Principal and Vice Principal), to review the papers, discuss lines of enquiry and identify trends.

2, Introduction, Administration, and Apologies

Welcome to Dr Dan Nicholls who is the new Executive Principal for MPA.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm

Apologies were received but not accepted for NP who has been persistently absent from Academy Council meetings for over a year.

Absent without apologies: PF and NP.

The meeting was deemed to be quorate.

AK advised in advance that she would be late to the meeting, due to a scheduling conflict, and arrived at 6.15pm.

TN and SC advised in advance that they needed to leave the meeting early for Ramadan.

3, Declarations of interest

The Academy Council confirmed there have been no changes their pecuniary interests since the last meeting.

4, Minutes of Previous Meeting (12th March 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

9, PH to liaise with the Ops Manager and CLF re central photocopier contracts - **Completed**

6, PH to circulate the CLF organisational diagram and contact numbers – **Completed**

6, PH to arrange for feedback from the Union representative about staff morale – **Completed**

6, PH to liaise with Ian Payne to determine the Staff Survey results – **Completed**

6, PH to share the CLF Sickness Absence procedure with all staff to reassure staff who have good attendance that staff absence is dealt with appropriately – **Completed.**

6, Academy Council Report **Paper circulated in advance**

It is pleasing to see that the pupil numbers are increasing, why is this?

The new building has been fundamental for marketing purposes, we have leafleted all the houses within a mile of the school, and we have increased the community open events. Walking around the school and seeing how it operates has cemented parent's decisions to send their children here. PH has met each parent and has answered their questions in depth which has helped to build trust.

Who is chasing the DfE for additional funding for the new pupils?

The CLF Finance Director (Sarah Lovell) is vigorously chasing the additional funding. Lord Agnew is required to sign-off requests for funding which is why the process is delayed. The CLF have advised that the necessary recruitment can take place as they are confident that the funding will be received.

What will the impact be?

£87k due to the new employee commitments.

(DN joined the meeting at 6.25pm)

Y2 predictions have all increased, but combined predictions are lower?

Y2 combined predictions are lower than we would have anticipated but are above last year. 25% of the cohort are pupils with SEND. The Y2's have started their SATs, but these will include teacher judgements and the teachers have already gathered evidence from children's books. Case studies will be drafted to indicate progress for the pupils with SEND. Some of the SEND need is SEMH. Our track record of improving academic outcomes for SEMH pupils is excellent, so if they remain with us we are confident that we can make rapid progress during KS2.

At the last meeting you were confident that the Y2 and Y6 SATs would be positive, but the CLF Risk Assessment in March increased the risk, can you explain this discrepancy?

Y6 have a teacher who did not return to work after Easter. We have put a plan in place to backfill the vacancy and who knows the children very well and can support them with their SATs, therefore we remain confident that the children will do well. There are seven or eight children who are on the cusp for combined. These children are being supported with specific interventions, and four or five are anticipated to achieve ARE. We aspire for combined results to be in the early 70% and are confident that we will be above combined for last year and for national outcomes.

DN, as a CLF Executive why does the CLF Risk Assessment indicate a 3?

The risk runs from a 1 (on track for Outstanding) to a 5 ('special measures' - requires CLF intervention). It is important that we do not assess risk after the event, therefore internally we need to assess each academy. MPA has moved to a new site and there are concerns around the Y2 SATs and the disruption in Y6, therefore a risk assessment of 2 is not appropriate. However, the AC should not be overly concerned with a risk assessment of 3.

Is attendance having an adverse effect on attainment for Y2 and Y6?

Not in Y2. However, some of the attendance issues are for marginal children in Y6. We are working closely with the families and in some cases visit the house and bring the children in. Two or three children could impact on our attainment due to absence.

What sort of parental response do you receive when you challenge attendance?

There are often persistent and repeated excuses and sometime the family dynamic is chaotic. Not all parents value education.

AK advised the Academy Council that she and JH have met to discuss the provision for LAC and PP children and that it is clear that the school know the children really well, and that everything that can be done to improve attendance is being done.

DN advised the Academy Council that there are attendance challenges across the Trust and that MPA's attendance procedures are robust. Case studies will support the work undertaken by the schools and the improvements that have arisen because of that.

Are there any concerns for Years 1 to 5 and have measures been put in place?

Y5 are using PIXL and children have been identified that have gaps in learning and interventions have been put in place. SATs paper analysis indicates that if key concepts are missing it can impact pupil's outcomes. A more secure transition is being arranged between Y5 and Y6 to ensure that the new teachers have a thorough understanding of their new class. The new curriculum ensures that pupils are being supported to ensure that ARE is achieved in each year group.

Y1 combined is 71% and we are planning for Y2 which will have one Y2 class and one mixed Y1/Y2 class with a strong and effective TA. An additional child with SEND needs who requires an EHCP has joined the cohort which will impact the data so that it appears as though it has dropped.

After the Y2 SATs do the children coast to the end of the year?

No. Writing in Y2 and Y6 is reported later in the year and we need to ensure that they pupils make as much progress as possible.

There are serious concerns about staff sickness absence, how does this compare across the Trust?

CLFs sickness average is 4%, but due to long-term absence at MPA ours was 8%. If we remove the long-term absence figures, the absence rate is still 5% which is a concern. The sickness absence has improved with support from the CLF Central Team HR. A presentation to all staff took place in T2, indicating the impact of staff absence. Nationally sickness absence is 3%. Our sickness absence is currently 5% due to the reduction in long-term absenteeism and the reduction in short sickness absence.

Does every member of staff receive a back to work interview?

Yes, regardless of their length of absence.

How has staff absence impacted on the academy, particularly the absence of the Y6 teacher?

The CLF HR Director (Ian Payne) has confirmed that the employment survey does not indicate that staff morale is low. When we have absence the team pull together to minimise the impact on classes. We are planning carefully for our children and utilising staff who are familiar to the children to mitigate against the absence of the class teacher.

Do we know when the Y6 teacher will return?

She is anticipated to return on Friday and will be available to support the children with their SATs.

How do you manage the additional pressure on staff when backfilling a position?

We take into account the length of time the back-fill is required for, and we are mindful that sometimes bringing a Supply Teacher in can be stressful for our colleagues.

All members of staff in the backfill arrangement have met to discuss the process and why it is necessary to maintain consistency for children.

ACTION: PH to feedback to the staff the appreciation of the Academy Council for backfilling absence.

The Safeguarding Policy advises that we provide induction for all pupils, how does this take place?

Jess and Cath meet the new children to introduce them to trusted adults and who they can speak to apart from the class teacher.

Does this process take place for all new children?

Where possible. We have termly Safeguarding assemblies and there are safeguarding displays around the school.

What about children with little English?

We have a 'T' symbol meaning trusted adult and when this is used we can then contact an interpreter.

Pg 68 of the Safeguarding Policy states that the school will ensure they are proactive with online safety and keeping parents up to date. Are you confident that you have the staff capacity for this?

Online and E-safety is covered regularly, and we have specific PSHE units to cover this topic. We speak to children and parents regularly and update the school newsletter with any updates. Each term we review the CPOMS E-Safety data.

Can the sixty page CLF Safeguarding Policy be reduced in length at all?

This can be considered.

ACTION: DN to feed back to the CLF that the MPA Councillors are concerned that the length of the CLF Safeguarding Policy may be a barrier for staff.

(SC and TN and left the meeting at 7.00pm)

Scrutiny

The feedback from Scrutiny is not qualitative and this make it difficult for the Academy Council to track and monitor it? Below are some Scrutiny recommendations:

Scrutiny recommends that we consider how current subject leaders work with the curriculum curators to further deepen the provision for children as we move into the next phase of curriculum development?

Science was developed by Craig Jones (HVA Principal) and Laurie Munro (BPA Principal) with support from our Science Curriculum Lead. The MPA History and Geography Lead also supported the central curriculum development.

Support the Academy Council to focus on the next stage of improvement?

An MPA away-day will take place next term to consider the priorities for next year, the AC Link Roles will then align to this. This will include increasing lettings income and further marketing to establish the school in the community.

ACTION: NM to draft an AC Development Plan for 2019-20, to include monitoring roles.

If you are having an away-day, can some of the Academy Councillors attend?

Yes, we will send an invitation.

ACTION: PH to invite the Academy Councillors to the MPA Away Day.

The Academy Council should work with the executive team?

Systems and structures within the school are required to prevent us from encouraging teachers to 'perform' when observed. A culture of drop-ins and informal feedback and constant dialogue needs to be created.

Can staff contribute to making suggestions about how they can be challenged?

Yes, we welcome staff input as we wish to be collegiate and don't wish to impose a regime that staff are uncomfortable with.

Can the SLT also teach some classes with staff observing to create a culture of leading by example?

Yes, we can consider this as part of the review process. Jenny has introduced 'solution circles' once a month where staff have six minutes with no interruptions to outline their concerns, followed by six minutes of discussion within the group, action steps and then a follow-up a week later. This process has received very good feedback.

Who comprises the group?

A mixture of staff from across the school.

You have had positive feedback, have you fed this back to the CLF?

This has been shared in the SENCO cluster and the APB cluster.

Scrutiny recommended we build on current primary school improvement to work with teachers to adapt planning?

We are a school who put members of staff forward for central work and have contributed to the central team and this is ongoing.

Will that still be possible next year with the budget restrictions?

We try to be creative to allow subject leaders time in the autumn and summer term, and during the inset days.

How does scrutiny know if you have actioned recommendations?

Via the Academy Council as there can be up to twelve months between Scrutiny meetings as schools with a higher risk score have three Scrutiny meetings a year. From September a single document will chart the school's journey through scrutiny.

SENCO Cluster

JH has been working with the SENCo Cluster for the last year. Therefore, a literacy and numeracy baseline has been introduced to the passports which is then updated on transition.

Attendance

MPA is part of the LA attendance pilot work. We have had feedback from the person that interviewed the parents and some recommendations have been made, e.g. texts to parents, and parents being encouraged to construct their own action plan.

7, Achievement and Standards

See Academy Council Report

8, Safeguarding Update

The front of house staff have shifts from 7.30am-11.30am and a new 9.00am to 4.00pm person has been recruited. These staff have a checklist to ensure that all the aspects of safeguarding are covered.

9, Finance, H&S and Estates

- **Reception intake Update**

The Reception pupil numbers are 50 confirmed plus two late admissions, despite the low birth rate in the area. We are anticipating that this will grow over the next few months and will have a positive impact on our funding.

10, Staffing Update

See above.

11, Pupil Voice

LW has met with the School Council re their designs for the playground. They have made suggestions like a flat trampoline, slide, castle, having their own bikes in the playground, speakers near the stage and a microphone for performances. All the children are very enthused by the designs.

Can we deliver on any of the suggestions?

Yes, we will respond to the School Council and advise them which suggestions will be implemented.

NM and BS attended the School Council meeting and informed the Academy Council that all the children contributed to the planning for a wellbeing week in June which NM and BS will attend. The quiet pupils grew in confidence during the meeting and all the children contributed. The children are excited about borrowing Noodle from WFA for the day!

Can the School Council pupils have a School Council badge?

Yes, this can be arranged.

ACTION: PH to arrange for School Council pupils to have a School Council badge.

12, Feedback from COAC

The new Ofsted framework was discussed and what questions Academy Councillors may be asked by Ofsted. We also discussed raising attainment across the Trust and managing exam anxiety. The wellbeing of students and staff has a high profile in the Trust.

ACTION: DN to update the Academy Council dashboard with targets.

13, Policies

None.

14, Papers for Information

- Attendance Link Visit – SC
- Learning Walk – BS
- MPA CIC Policy (No change)
- Safeguarding Policy

15, AOB

None.

16, Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 16th July 2019, 6.00pm

Meeting ended at: 7.45pm

ACTIONS

ITEM	ACTION	INITIALS
C/F T4	PH to arrange for feedback from the Union representative about staff morale	PH
C/F T4	PH to liaise with Ian Payne to determine the Staff Survey results	PH
6	PH to feedback to the staff the appreciation of the Academy Council for backfilling absence.	PH
6	DN to feed back to the CLF that the MPA Councillors are concerned that the length of the CLF Safeguarding Policy may be a barrier for staff.	DN
6	NM to draft an AC Development Plan for 2019-20, to include monitoring roles.	NM
6	PH to invite the Academy Councillors to the MPA Away Day.	PH
11	PH to arrange for School Council pupils to have a School Council badge.	PH
12	DN to update the Academy Council dashboard with targets.	DN

Signed by Chair: _____ Date: _____