

Minutes – LHA Academy Council Meeting

Version: Final
Meeting Date: Monday 2nd February 2026
Location: Teams
Time: 3:30-5:30pm

Chair: Brigid Allen

Attendees: Brigid Allen (Chair)
 Claire Pannell (Vice Chair)
 Nicole Deighton (Sponsored Councillor)
 Kate Gillam (Parent Councillor)
 Luz Stella Martinez Gracia (Sponsored Councillor)

In attendance: Natalie Sweet (Principal)
 Stephen O’Callahan (Deputy Principal)
 Liz Tincknell (Head of Governance)
 Sally Bryant (Deputy Head of Governance)
 Lis Jolley (Executive Principal)
 Jas Legrand (Governance Administrator/Clerk)

Apologies: Zoe Jenkins (Deputy Principal)

Not in attendance:

Minutes

		Action
1	Introduction, Administration and Apologies	
1.1	Introduce JL as new clerk and SB and LT supporting and observing as head and deputy of governance.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	None	
3	Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising	
3.1	Accept as a record	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	Follow up around CLF staff help at AC.	

	Conversation at COAC – at this time unknown about the progress made, however we are able to invite a parent from another school as a parent councillor. LT – confirms this is the case, as long as the parent has a child of the same school age.	
4.2	Review and approval of policies Most policies are fully approved ACTION – JL to keep an eye on number of approvals on the policies.	JL
4.2.1	The threshold of approvals currently is: In person it requires x5 academy council approvals, whereas online only requires x3 LT – able to confirm changing threshold x3 for both in person and online however only one approval can be staff, the other two need to be parent or sponsored	
4.2.2	Review people premium strategy ACTION NS and BA to sit down and review for AC	NS/BA
4.3	Impact on student's vs curriculum – will be discussed within report	
4.4	There is a big focus on attendance – will be discussed within report	
4.5	Adjusted timetables – will be discussed within report	
4.6	COAC update from BA There is new Ofsted framework, discussing the importance of career link and AC being aware of careers and advice. There is a PowerPoint that CLF careers created, the link to be shared with LM. ACTION BA to share PowerPoint with LM and discuss at next meeting	BA
4.7	LM completing training for careers link	
5	Academy Council Report	
5.1	LJ joined the meeting 15:44	
5.2	Year11 Update SO	
5.2.1	Attendance There are 6 students' currently in year 11, there is currently only 1 student above the 85% target. The main challenge is getting children into school, sporadic attendance with no clear pattern, which is the biggest barrier for academic progress. LHA is sourcing tuition and arranging daily visits where appropriate. Engagement in school can also be a challenge when linked to attendance, we have been varying the curriculum which can help with this. The students do respond well when in school, keeping consistent staff for them.	
5.2.2	Qualifications Almost all students working towards functional skills level 1, we are still awaiting results from the assessments, and some may be on functional skills level 2 before the summer. Our main ambition is to bring in subject specialists for English and Maths, this will improve subject knowledge and enable progressive planning, we want to achieve FS2 for all students and then have a few sitting GCSEs as well. Improving subject knowledge will help to deliver more GCSEs in the future. We are seeking support centrally to broaden subject knowledge.	
5.2.3	Strengths and challenges	

	Strengths: • The relationships staff have with students • Our enriched curriculum with outdoor learning and trips • Staff willingness to go above and beyond Challenges: • Attendance, • Specific subject knowledge • Robust curriculum plans • Breadth of qualification offer Solutions: • Further work with EWO • More student voice on school experience • Adapting the curriculum to meet individual need • Further support from CLF school improvement team • Subject specialists • 3-4 year curriculum plan • Explore more suitable qualifications Training for staff for wider range of subject qualifications	
5.2.4	Can we have presentation in with the minutes? ACTION: SO to share his presentation without children's names	SO
5.2.5	How effective has help been and how should we monitor the effectiveness of the plan? The best way to monitor is through the success of entry level/functional skills in easter and then in summer. The help has been really good; Jen Faulkner has come in for half a day once a week and has been sitting with teachers to provide a scheme of learning. Functional skills level 1 ramps up from entry level and staff can feel the pressure, surrounding knowledge, because they want to do a good job. ACTION – In the next 2 AC meetings we would like to see some documented progress in those subjects.	NS/SO
5.2.6	Is there a baseline assessment into year 11: what made you start from that point with children and then track the path level of development? And the same with attendance, look at the start point and then track the impact on individuals? ACTION – SO to produce for future meetings.	SO
5.2.7	Which exam board? NSFE ACTION – ND to compare resources and teaching methods with SO for curriculum.	ND/SO
5.2.8	Have you considered technology to support and fill these gaps? This has not been considered this year, but technology has been used to locate resources to deliver and plan. The most powerful thing for us to do is to use the expertise of school improvement team Jen Faulkner from the trust. If there was something that fitted into the curriculum, it would be useful and welcomed. ACTION – LM to share some English, maths and science resources that may be useful.	LM
5.2.9	Discussion around support for child A with high attendance, low engagement Access arrangement and barriers surrounding trauma, can struggle to engage with sat down learning.	

5.3	Claire Pannell joined the meeting 15:55	
5.4	New build update There have been discussions around the future structure of staff for when we have the new build and recruiting for the next phase of LHA. There has been no progress on the new build, various electrical grids have been put in place but there hold ups from wildlife. There is a piece of work being created on the impact on children, for getting additional funding, which will highlight what children are missing out on. The impact on the students is significant; the practicalities of the current building can cause conflict and dysregulation for the students.	
5.4.1	Is there an impact on WHA? CLF are looking at this.	
5.5	Pupil Voice Report Key points: The movement of classes in term 2 has impacted some students as they had to build new relationships, so we can recognise where some of the comments have come from Question 7 will require some time to look at and unpick the reasons behind that.	
5.5.1	Question 14 – how are adults dealing with bullying, strongly disagree is high, what do you make of that? It requires building some understanding with the students about what bullying looks like and how things are dealt with that they may not be aware of. There will be some work around this in PSHE. The behaviour policy is up for review in September, through working with Sky we will develop this. We will work on the restorative conversations to update the children about the outcomes of what has happened.	
5.6	SEN Panel meeting about September intake: 6 children at year 5 and 6, parents will be notified next week. It was a positive process and we have a strong relationship with LA. We want to meet the needs of the new children and have had conversations about in year starters Does us not able to increase our numbers impact on North Somerset? 59 pupil numbers are agreed for next academic year; with the new build it will be 65. There are 300 children needing provisions and we can take 6. There are 250 still hoping for a placement, LA to decide whether they stay at mainstream school or create a package of support?	
5.6.1	Something happening in Bristol or just North Somerset? Bristol is in the same situation. There is a lack of SEN provision. There is a challenge surrounding NS students travelling to Bristol and vice versa but currently no provision to swap back student. There will be new places in a Backwell school opening, it looks like there will be resources and funding placed in mainstream schools.	
5.7	Attendance NS A log is kept of attendance on CPOM's, there will be a tracker set up. Comparison of term 1 and term 2 attendance, the school are setting up different resources to support individual children.	
5.7.1	ACTION – NS to present at the next AC showing the comparison again with term 3 data	NS
5.7.2	Would a child retain their place if they step away from LHA?	

	Yes, if they are taking a temporary package, but if they choose to come off role and have a package, then no place at LHA. Parental choice on whether to take them off role.	
5.7.3	Helpful to have the breakdown of individuals, compared to the whole school attendance, we can see more of a progress within the students.	
5.7.4	What mechanisms are in place for adapting provisions when it seems it is having reverse effect? (reduced timetable) There are conversations with the families and student every fortnight and review the process, we look at what will be positive for the student and to see whether they are able to increase, or need to decrease	
5.8	SO left the meeting 16:37	
5.9	Suspensions How to manage them in the future is a discussion point, the suspensions are at both sites, more so at Weston than Nailsea. There has been regular CPD with staff on dysregulation and every morning there is a briefing with staff encouraged to use the PACE approach. “Floater” to support staff, around the site, team teach member of staff is very attuned to pupils. Ongoing work to develop skills to support the students. There is more movement around site due to broken doors and locks broken, classrooms need to be their safe space, this has caused some dysregulation. There was a group which had been having an impact on this. There is a class with class leads and not teachers, which means they can find high behaviours challenging. There has been a lot of new staff, work is being done on building those relationships, as the students are needing that trusted adult. Tightened up on vapes and phones at term 3 – no phones. The first few weeks was challenging for the students, as they are like their security blankets, we have reassured them they can always call family via staff. They now have logical and natural consequences, for a clear picture for the students, so they know what to expect.	
6	Safeguarding	
6.1	KG and Liam termly report on safeguarding The phone ban initially caused some issues but now settled. Team Teach has given more confidence for staff which has helped to calm the students. Things happen within the school and we know there will be challenges, but they are dealt with. Every decision is very considered and choices surrounding suspensions or other consequences. LAC safeguarding issues outside of school have been discussed. ACTION – KG to have a briefing regarding LAC and kinship orders from Liam	KG
6.1.1	Do we log children kinship care? Yes	
7	Areas of focus identified in Agenda Planning	
7.1	Main challenges for LHA – Attendance, the site issues, curriculum delivery	
7.1.1	Whose responsibility is the doors? LHA and CLF, LHA to raise an issue and the site team action it. Some of these things seem to take a long time and temporary fixes aren't necessarily effective.	

	CLF – clarifying that fire doors are being mended and then broken again over and again. The doors were working last week and then are broken again this week. This is an ongoing daily frustration, some of the issues wouldn't be happening if the doors were working properly and things wouldn't escalate.	
8	Staff and Wellbeing	
8.1	Staffing There is a secure staffing structure, Jo Thomas has been promoted to AAP. Advertised for KS2 lead, specifically for English and will be interviewing for that before the end of term. Agency staff going to permanent within the new buildings. Strength in Nailsea team and is stable as things stand.	
8.1.1	Do staff get the opportunity to move between the two sites? Not yet, that is the hope and something to do with transition from Nailsea to Weston children. Term 5 and 6 the hope is for staff to be able to get to know students to help support their transition.	
8.1.2	How do new students get managed to support the change in location? They come in and look around and meet key adults, then transition agreement with current provision, then review weekly with pupil's voice.	
8.1.3	When will there be another set of mocks? April/end of March. This will assist in reducing the fear of exam environment.	
8.1.4	How do you feel the children manage with those assessments? Four managed incredibly well, trusted adults in with them whilst following the guidelines. They do get another chance with functional skills, which helps them ACTION – NS to update on results at next meeting (as long has been received)	NS
9	Any other business	
9.1	Ofsted Framework LJ – Presentation is now included with meeting documents The intentions of the new Ofsted framework: - To raise standards for children, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. - Provide parents with more detail on education provisions. - For inspections to be fair to schools and the professionals who work with them. LHA did well on old framework, but this is a change and there will be new approaches for academy councillors to adopt. 3 main principles – achieving, belonging and thriving, with a focus on inclusion and an open and positive safeguarding culture. Key changes: Core evaluation areas: safeguarding (met/not met), inclusion, curriculum and teaching, achievement, attendance and behaviour, personal development and wellbeing, leadership and governance 5-point scale of judgements but no overall grade - A new “inclusion” evaluation area - New inspection toolkits and methodology to clearly set out what inspectors will consider and reduce workload - Inspection findings to be grounded in each provider's unique circumstance - Greater resource and training for inspection teams to drive quality and consistency in Ofsted work	

	- Day 1 of inspections will have Tarif+1 to reduce pressure on leaders - All inspections HMI led There will be a 5-stage scale of judgements, and the standards have been tightened. There are clear descriptors in the toolkit, particularly for academy councillors and specific questions to ask leadership. They will look at that starting points for SEND pupils and there is a commitment to understand that within specialist provisions. There will now be report cards to replace inspection reports. There is a big focus on the wellbeing of leaders and there is the option of stopping the inspection if their wellbeing is not being considered. There is a new “category of concern” relating to leadership and governance which will automatically place the school in special measures if graded “urgent improvement”, but if they haven’t been graded as that, then there is no category of concern. It protects you from the special measure’s judgement as long as the leadership and governance are graded above urgent improvement. Leadership and governance, for academy councillors there is a lot of guidance which will be a piece of work for academy councillors. Leaders are preparing in a few different ways, the Ofsted cohort (schools in Ofsted window) have been meeting weekly since September, with FAQs, website updates and school improvements. There are also webinars for learning more – SEF and SEE will be helpful. The big things to look at for us: Achievement and inclusion; ultimately if we get inclusion right, we get Ofsted right. This is already the heart and soul of what the trust does.	
9.1.1	Will that come from central team? It will mean we need to be looking at the framework as we are questioning through the AC meetings, to make sure we are asking the right questions and AC members know and understand the framework. COAC may be the ones to discuss, LJ to take back to Kate Richardson ACTION – LJ to take this to Kate Richardson to shape some of the questions to the team to demonstrate the language and make it minutes ACTION – JL to add Ofsted new framework on governor hub	LJ JL (completed)
9.1.2	When will next inspection be for LHA? It will not be for three years, so gives us time to get to a good place ready for the inspection.	
9.1.3	ACTION: BA and NS to work together to understand what changes need to be made with the meetings	BA/NS
9.2	Meeting concluded 17.28	

ACTIONS

4.2	ACTION – JL to keep an eye on amount of approvals on the policies	JL
4.2.2	ACTION NS and BA to sit down and review for AC	NS/BA
4.6	ACTION BA to share PowerPoint with LM and discuss at next meeting	BA
5.2.4	ACTION: SO to share his presentation without children's names	SO
5.2.6	ACTION – SO to produce for future meetings.	SO
5.2.7	ACTION – ND to compare resources and teaching methods with SO for curriculum.	ND/SO

5.2.8	ACTION – LM to share some English, maths and science resources that may be useful.	LM
5.7.1	ACTION – NS to present at the next AC showing the comparison again with term 3 data	NS
6.1	ACTION – KG to have a briefing regarding LAC and kinship orders from Liam	KG
8.1.4	ACTION – NS to update on results at next meeting (as long has been received)	NS
9.1.1	ACTION – LJ to take this to Kate Richardson to shape some of the questions to the team to demonstrate the language and make it minutes	LJ
9.1.1	ACTION – JL to add Ofsted new framework on governor hub	JL (completed)