

# Minutes – Frome Vale Academy Council

<b>Date</b>	6 December 2022	
<b>Location:</b>	Frome Vale Academy	
<b>Time:</b>	5.15 pm (Online Teams)	
<b>Present:</b>	Laura Walder (LW)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Chair)
	Kate Richardson (KR)	Executive Principal
	Paul Stephens (PS)	Parent Academy Councillor
	Lori Streich (LS)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Sophie Pring (SP)	Teacher Academy Councillor
	Nikki Dawson (ND)	Senior Vice Principal
<b>Apologies:</b>	Jan Saunders (JS)	Senior Principal
	Meriam Gordon (MG)	Parent Academy Councillor
<b>Absent:</b>	Joyce Adeyeye (JA)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
<b>Attendees:</b>	Linda Corbidge (LC)	Academy Council Clerk
	Christian Simmons (CS)	Observer
	Sophia Feinbaum (SF)	Observer

## Minutes

Item	Description	Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	
1.1	Welcome and introductions were made by LW. LW welcomed Christian and Sophia who were interested in joining the council.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
2.1	There were no verbal declarations of interest made for this meeting.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
3.1	Two vacancies were noted; it was hoped that Christian and Sophia would decide to join the academy council after the meeting.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held 11 October 2022 were approved as a true record.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
5.1	<b><i>LW to progress EOIs for councillor vacancies</i></b> - completed	
5.2	<b><i>JS/ND to recruit for a Student Advocate</i></b> ND reported no interest at present. <b><u>ACTION: Taken forward to seek Student Advocate</u></b>	<b>ND</b>
5.3	<b><i>LS will share Safeguarding visit link report after meeting.</i></b> Visit note had been shared – see later item.	
5.4	<b><i>Consideration when planning activities around religious celebrations for children to give to friends if festival not celebrated at home.</i></b> Completed	
5.5	<b><i>LW to share curriculum link visit note.</i></b> <b><u>ACTION: Taken forward</u></b>	<b>LW</b>

Item	Description	Action
5.6	<b>Clerk to request approval of SEND Policy by email</b> The SEND Policy had been <b>approved</b> by email.	
5.7	<b>KR/LW will raise question re councillors going on maternity leave and replacement /covering of important link roles in the meantime to central team/COAC</b> It was noted link roles were being covered until return of councillors from maternity leave.	
5.8	<b><u>JS will share Evergreen Academy Council dates for councillors to look at their availability. JS will invite the Chair of EPA to observe an FVA meeting.</u></b> <b><u>ACTION: Taken forward</u></b>	<b>JS</b>
	<b>Academy Council Report</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Quality of Education</b>	
6.1	ND reported that they were pleased with the current strong data shown in the report and referred councillors to the Academy website for data trends.	
6.2	ND provided highlights from the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently rating as outstanding, the Academy is in a strong place and is developing curriculum leaders to continually improve the offer of learning. History, Science and Reading completed so far showing trends across all which will be developed further over next couple of terms then other subjects to follow.</li> <li>• New Behaviour Policy implemented around ‘Be safe, be kind, be respectful, be a Frome Vale Citizen’ following JS/ND attending a talk re behaviour and implementation. Really strong impact already; the policy is proving really effective at managing incidents. Pupil voice completed, which JS will share.</li> <li>• Rachel Symons (CLF Reading Lead) has been in to work with Y3 teacher for writing. Really positive.</li> <li>• Curriculum – ensured all subject leads know network dates for networking/PD opportunities across the CLF.</li> </ul> <b><u>ACTION: JS to share pupil voice around new Behaviour Policy at next meeting</u></b>	<b>JS</b>
	<b>Questions from Academy Council</b>	
6.3	<b>It would be helpful to have trend data shared at the next meeting.</b> <b><u>ACTION: Trends on data to be shared for next meeting.</u></b>	<b>ND</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<b>Behaviour and Exclusions</b>	
7.1.1	Behaviour was noted as <b>good</b> in the report.	
7.1.2	Councillors shared feedback from recent visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LS – when visiting weekly observed confident and well-behaved young children. ND commented that this is a result of the curriculum around being a Frome Vale Citizen.</li> <li>• SP commented that a recent visit by children to a local care home was great, the children were confident and starting to build links with the community.</li> <li>• LW – on recent school visit behaviour was good wherever the children were whether in the playground and around the school.</li> </ul>	

Item	Description	Action
	ND commented that there had been a lot of Trust visits this term. One of the strongest comments received is how confident and well-behaved the children are. <i>(Sophia joined the meeting)</i>	
<b>7.2</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	
7.2.1	<p>ND provided information as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Academy are focussed on improving attendance. KR leads on monitoring, and from the Trust.</li> <li>ND explained the process when a child is not in school e.g., supportive home visit if no contact. Contact is made again on Day 2 etc. again being supportive.</li> <li>For children who are repeat offenders of long-term absence (4 children) this may result in ND supporting the family to encourage the children into school.</li> <li>Current attendance is low at 90.5%. Yesterday 50 children were off, today 43 were off and 4 children were sent home. Current sickness theme is around flu like illnesses, which is similar with staff.</li> <li>Discussion with Jo Crickson (Health &amp; Safety CLF Lead) around Strep A as one diagnosis already.</li> <li>Everything possible is being done to improve attendance. Measures taken today: emergency briefing, reminders good hand hygiene, more hand gel in each classroom. One cleaner is absent and there is only one coming in to check touch points are clean to prevent spread of illness.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Questions from Academy Council</b>	
7.2.2	<p><b>With so many children off, is there a plan in place to support the children when they return?</b></p> <p>Teachers are skilled in managing learning when children return and we are confident that the team can support children to catch up. The absence is also spread across year groups. Children with long-term absence are also supported by the Education Welfare Officer and the CLF Attendance Lead. We have regular support from the CLF central team and also ensure communication with PHE Bristol &amp; South West for guidance and on what to communicate to families.</p> <p><i>(CS left the meeting)</i></p>	
7.2.3	<p><b>Parents are concerned with Strep A – more information is always welcome.</b></p> <p>An email was sent to parents this morning after we ensured we had the correct information.</p> <p>Discussion followed around media attention on Strep A and information for parents on when to send children to school if feeling unwell.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION: Councillors recommended sending information again to families around when children should be sent to school if feeling unwell.</u></b></p>	PS
7.2.4	<p><b>Are there guidelines for staff on when to stay home if unwell?</b></p> <p>We need to emphasise to staff not to come in if unwell as staff don't like to stay off. It has been tricky this week because of the number of staff unwell. KR also supports with wellbeing. The wellness action plan reminds staff about the Employee Assistance programme and CLF paying for the flu vaccination.</p>	
<b>7.3</b>	<b>SEND</b>	
7.3.1	ND reported that there had been quite a few consultations regarding children joining the school with EHCPs and complex needs.	

Item	Description	Action
	<b>Questions from Academy Council</b>	
7.3.1	<b>Is there a reason for the increase?</b> Our Ofsted report encourages children with SEND and also my work with BCC and the Family Support Group. We welcome the children but need to be mindful of complexity of needs to ensure children are safe and thriving at Frome Vale.	
7.3.2	<b>What information is given to supply teachers about their classes regarding SEND and children with complex needs?</b> Information is shared where possible; often the time we have to give induction is small. Information on an EHCP or something specific is always shared or if complex we may move the child; it is individual to the young person.	
7.3.3	<b>Is there a standard briefing pack?</b> Yes, where possible we try to use the same supply teachers and feedback to agencies to try to build consistency with supply.	
7.4	<b>Pupil Premium</b>	
	<b>Questions form Academy Council</b>	
7.4.1	<b>What are the gaps between PP and Non-PP children and what actions are taking place to close the gap?</b> We are always focussing on reducing the gap; part of the AIP is about closing the gaps. PP is higher at the top end of school and significantly less in lower years due to the changing demographic in the school which results in difficulty in comparing gaps between year groups.	
7.4.2	<b>Is PP children's absence noticeably different or worse than non-PP children?</b> PP attendance is currently 92.6%, non-PP 95% - this period of illness will affect the headline figure. We are aiming for the attendance gap to be below 2.1% as attendance is crucial. Frome Vale is in line with national average. We always focus on how we support families to find the barrier. This includes robust conversations around attendance to create a sense of belonging, how we support our families to bring children into school and support on catching up on learning when they return.	
8	<b>Safeguarding</b>	
	<i>Safeguarding Term 1 Report and Safeguarding Link Visit Report had been shared.</i>	
8.1	LS shared highlights from her visit report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LS had met with the Designed Safeguarding Lead this term and discussed attendance which is currently quite low at 94% as there is currently a lot of sickness.</li> <li>• Lower attendance is a national picture. Being a small school affects data if a few children are absent.</li> <li>• Felt reassured that the Safeguarding Team are good.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Questions from Academy Council</b>	
8.2	<b>To support links with the community it would be helpful for the DSL to be aware of positive things in the community.</b> JS has a meeting with The Vassall Centre to forge links. <b>ND welcomed any councillor links or information on community groups.</b>	
8.3	LS reported that the DSL will be away for a time from 15 December. LS reassured councillors that the absence is well planned, with SLT covering in her absence.	

Item	Description	Action
<b>9</b>	<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	
9.1	SP (H&S Link) reported that new climbing play equipment was being installed today.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Equality Diversity and Inclusion</b>	
	<b>Questions from Academy Council</b>	
10.1	<b>Can councillors support the parents who are reviewing the children's library books ?</b>	
<b>10.1</b>	Support would be welcome as reviewing each book for EDI is a thorough and long process.  Discussion followed on criteria of books which need to be kept, including some which have a place to provide conversations with the children on what is happening and why.  It was recognised that books in the classrooms are good and purposeful.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Link Councillor updates</b>	
11.1	LW reported that on her recent visit to school she had observed book work and it was good to see progression of writing through the years. Behaviour was also great. <b>LW encouraged all councillors to arrange a visit.</b>	
11.2	PS said that parents were willing to offer support for events where enough prior notice is given.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Policies</b>	
12.1	The following CLF Board approved policies were <b>noted</b> by Councillors: Complaints; Exclusions and Suspensions, Information Security for System Administrators; RHSE, Frome Vale Admissions Sept 2024. The following Academy policy was <b>approved</b> by councillors (by email) – SEND Policy	
<b>13</b>	<b>Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC</b>	
13.1	LW said that new rules regarding political impartiality in schools were reported at the COAC meeting. ND commented that the Academy will be supported through the Trust.	
<b>14</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
14.1	None.	

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm.

**Next meetings:**

<b>FVA</b>	<b>Tues 5 - 7pm</b>	
AC4	28-Feb-23	
<b>AC5</b>	<b>25-Apr-23</b>	<b>Tues</b>
AC6	4-Jul-23	