

Minutes – Frome Vale Academy Council

Date	17 October 2023	
Location:	Frome Vale Academy	
Time:	5.15 pm	
Present:	Laura Walder (LW)	Sponsor Academy Councillor (Chair)
	Kate Richardson (KR)	Director of Education
	Jan Saunders (JS)	Senior Principal
	Nikki Dawson (ND)	Senior Vice Principal
	Paul Stephens (PS)	Parent Academy Councillor
	Christian Simmons (CS)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Lori Streich (LS)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Ricki Petchley (RP)	Support Staff Academy Councillor
	Tracy Pakrooh (TP)	Teacher Academy Councillor
Apologies:	Sophia Feinbaum (SF)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
Attendees:	Linda Corbidge (LC)	Academy Council Clerk
	Tom Hartshorn (TH)	Observer (prospective councillor)

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions	
1.1	Welcome and introductions were made by LW. New councillors were welcomed, and introductions were made.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no verbal declarations of interest made for this meeting. LW reminded councillors to complete Declarations of Interest if they had not done so.	
3	Governance	
3.1	Membership	
3.1.1	LW welcomed new academy councillors Tracy and Ricki to the meeting. Tom was welcomed as an observer whilst awaiting completion of HR checks.	
3.1.2	It was noted there was a vacancy for LA Representative. <u>ACTION: ND will follow up prospective contacts for an LA Councillor.</u>	ND
3.2	Link Councillors	
3.2.1	It was confirmed that RP was the new Health & Safety Link Councillor.	
3.3	Training	
3.3.1	LW reminded councillors to complete all training.	
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held 4 July 2023 were agreed as a true record.	

Item	Description	Action
5	Matters Arising	
5.1	<i>KR will put CS/SF in touch with Saima, Trust EDI Lead taken forward to September. JS reported that she had met with Saima.</i>	
5.2	<i>ND/JS will think about the best way parents can donate money to the school. See later item.</i>	
5.3	<i>JS will send communication out to parents re EOIs in PTA roles to possibly take forward. See later item.</i>	
6	Staffing/Wellbeing/Staff Voice	
6.1	<p>JS reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive staff wellbeing; some changes had been made following the CLF staff survey at the end of last year, primarily around workload. The workload action plan had been shared. • Another CLF Staff Voice Survey would be sent out before the next meeting. • Staff response to changes to workload is on the strategic plan. • The apprentice TA had made a good start and wants to become a qualified teacher through this route. SGS College is very supportive. • Staff wellbeing – staff have a snack basket. A staff member receives a thank you postcard each Friday. • Staff had requested relaxation space however there is no space. • Kirsty had attended the Mental Health Network. • Every member of staff has been given opportunity for a 1:1 once a term which has been very beneficial. 	
	Questions from Academy Council	
6.2	<p>Who looks after your wellbeing?</p> <p>We have a duty of care to staff to ensure they are not working longer hours. KR supports SLT and ND/JS have been on courses where they gain support from meeting others from CLF.</p>	
6.3	<p>Do staff receive mentoring or coaching?</p> <p>Coaching is offered within CLF and staff can approach ND/JS to request. Employee Assistance is also available. Staff are very good at checking in on each other.</p>	
6.4	<p>Is there a policy around staff responding to emails?</p> <p>Staff know there is no expectation to respond outside of hours and we encourage our staff to rest outside of work hours. We have noticed a huge reduction in the number of emails from the Trust although ND receives a lot of emails from the LA with expectation to respond out of hours.</p> <p>Discussion followed on workload where it was agreed that everyone has different ways of working. JS commented that the school looks at efficiency in everything they do. Being a smaller school with single form entry does result in more work/planning for each teacher. RP commented that as a new staff member he had received excellent support.</p>	
6.5	How do the responses from the last survey compare to other CLF schools?	

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	We had a lower score than Evergreen and took learning from that. We are utilising Forest School provision to help staff workload. There are two new members of the teaching team; one has found a big difference coming to a single form school re workload. The biggest strain for the school has been on the admin team – particularly with the change to Bromcom.	
6.6	Is the administration around Bromcom improving? Has it added to the Operations Manager workload? It is improving but it is adding to the Operations Manager's workload. Bromcom don't respond quickly to calls.	
6.7	Has it affected Safeguarding? It has not affected safeguarding pupils, but it has affected obtaining accurate information quickly.	
6.8	Why are Bromcom taking so long to answer? Is the feedback being shared? Bromcom over-relied on the training. Feedback is being centrally collected and fed back.	
6.9	Is there any risk attendance might not be recorded accurately? We have covered this now by adjusting coding.	
6.10	Is the apprenticeship system a way of increasing diversity in recruitment? There are many different routes.	
7	Academy Council Report	
	<i>AC Report had been shared</i>	
7.1	SEND	
7.1.1	ND highlighted the very high need in the Reception cohort this year with the most complicated cohort of children the school has ever had. ND explained the support put in place and ongoing work involved in trying to help the children and families and with requests for top up funding from Bristol City Council.	
	Questions from Academy Council	
7.1.2	How is the new Early Years teacher coping? Very well; the Early Years team are strong. We also put in place an extra member of the team this year. Some children have made phenomenal progress already.	
7.2	Attendance	
	Questions from Academy Council	
7.2.1	Is there lower attendance in Reception? There is no stark difference in cohort attendance.	
7.2.2	Are you able to remove outliers from the statistics? No, attendance is an indication of what is going on for that child and we need to see the accurate picture. We now give Calpol in school after checking with the parent – this is having an impact on keeping children in school.	
7.2.3	There are lots of colds around in schools in winter, are staff offered flu jabs? Yes.	
7.2.4	Are children offered the nasal spray? Yes, for those who will take it.	

Item	Description	Action
7.3	PTA	
7.3.1	JS advised that following the previous meeting discussion, a PTA Group had now been established . ND explained the set-up of the process with the next action being to set up a timetable of events and communication process for parents. There will also be an Amazon wish list and once the PTA bank account is established details will be circulated to parents to donate if they wish.	
7.4	Academy Review Visit (ARV)	
7.4.1	<p>JS explained what is involved in the Academy Review Visit highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had chosen an Oracy focus as they wanted an external look following becoming an official partner with Voice 21 this academic year. • First visit last week from Voice 21. It was a very positive visit with Voice 21 noting that it is a strength in the school and the strongest seen in any school visited. The pupil voice groups in the school showed their ability to present and talk and be able to discuss and move learning on through discussion next focus. • The ARV looked at how does talk move the learning on, with KR undertaking pupil voice. There were clear outcomes from that – some classes were stronger than others and some work around implementation of things already in place. • There were clear objectives from Voice 21 and the ARV visit – exploratory talk to move learning onto next stage. Development on questioning/disagreeing what that means/resilience rag rating. • Voice 21 want the school to be a case study. <p><u>ACTION: LW asked for notes on Pupil Voice</u></p>	KR
7.5	Pupil Voice	
7.5.1	<p>JS reported that recent pupil voice included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should be on the menu for Census Day. • Swimming – the school are looking at ways of introducing it in Year 3. Councillors expressed their support, recognising that expense of swimming lessons outside of school. 	
	Questions from Academy Council	
7.4.2	<p>Is there a cost to Voice 21?</p> <p>Yes, we have a one-year membership paid by the Trust.</p> <p>Councillors suggested the relationship re case study may help with reduced funding going forward.</p>	
7.4.3	<p>Will there be debating clubs?</p> <p>Yes, that is an aim.</p>	
7.6	Pupil Premium	
7.6.1	<p>JS explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that children with PP achieve better at Frome Vale which has been the trend for the last few years. It was noted that this is not the trend nationally. • JS outlined the key strands in the Pupil Premium document on the website. • That numbers of children on role who are eligible for PP has dropped over the last few years. 	

Item	Description	Action
	Questions from Academy Council	
7.6.2	Do you see tangible results from that? We see them when Year 6 children leave the school. There is currently a lot of SEN in the school, and we need to ensure we are supporting in the area they need. By the time children leave the school children with PP achieve as well if not better than non-PP children.	
7.6.3	Why have numbers eligible for PP dropped? There has been a change in demographics.	
7.6.4	LS reported that she will meet with ND and report on any gaps/focus at the next meeting. <u>ACTION: LS to report on Pupil Premium gaps/focus at the next meeting.</u>	LS
8	Budget	
	Questions from Academy Council	
8.1	How is the budget this year? It is the tightest budget for a while and will be a challenge this year although we do receive support from the Trust.	
8.2	It was agreed that the new PTA will help with budgets, particularly around school trips. JS explained two new charity roles from The Vassall Centre which will support the aim around building community; one based at The Vassall Centre and one Parent Liaison Partner who will form links with parents. It is hoped that one of the rooms downstairs can be changed to a family room to support the work. LS suggested exploring use of minibuses with The Centre as an alternative to using coaches for school visits. Discussion followed around parents obtaining minibus licences. <u>ACTION: JS will look into how Evergreen organised minibus licences for parents.</u>	JS
9	Safeguarding	
	<i>The Safeguarding Annual Report 22-23 had been shared.</i>	
9.1	LS reported that she would be meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the end of next term. LS will follow up on the Annual Report and share notes. JS explained that safeguarding meetings have been increased to weekly with SLT looking at attendance at the same time.	
10	Health & Safety	
10.1	RP reported on the recent audit commenting that he was very pleased as issues had reduced since the previous audit meeting. JS commented that RP had done a lot of work and it was a good audit. Any RAK? No	
	Questions from Academy Council	
10.2	Is there any RAK concrete in the school?	
10.3	None.	
11	Equality Diversity and Inclusion	
11.1	There had not been a meeting this term.	

Item	Description	Action
12	Policies	
12.1	Councillors approved the Health & Safety Policy. Councillors approved local adaptations to the CLF Positive Handling & Physical Intervention and the Safeguarding Policy.	
13	Link Councillor updates	
13.1	There were no further updates.	
14	Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC	
14.1	None.	
15	AOB	
15.1	Academy Councillors recognised the difficulties arising from the huge increase in higher needs of children in the school and the complete lack of resources/agencies externally to support schools and commended all the staff at the school.	
15.2	LW Encouraged councillors to come into school for a day.	

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Next meetings:

FVA		
AC1	27/09/2023	5-8pm (CLF Board & Academy Council Results Review)
AC2	17/10/2023	5-7pm
AC3	12/12/2023	5-7pm
AC4	27/02/2024	5-7pm
AC5	23/04/2024	5-7pm
AC6	09/07/2024	5-7pm