

Minutes – Frome Vale Academy Council

Version

Date 30 November 2021

Location: Online Teams meeting

Time: 5.15 pm

Present:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Laura Walder (LW) | Sponsor Academy Councillor (Chair) |
| Joyce Adeyeye (JA) | Sponsor Academy Councillor |
| Hope Allen (HA) | Support Staff Academy Councillor (Vice Chair) |
| Lucy Fulton (LF) | Sponsor Academy Councillor |
| Meriam Gordon (MG) | Parent Academy Councillor |
| Dilan Kaygisiz (DK) | Sponsor Academy Councillor |
| Paul Stephens (PS) | Parent Academy Councillor |
| Lori Streich (LS) | Sponsor Academy Councillor |

Apologies:

| | |
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| Jan Saunders (JS) | Principal |
| Kate Richardson (KR) | Executive Principal |

Attendees: Linda Corbidge (LC) Academy Council Clerk

Minutes

| Item | Description | Action |
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| 1 | Introductions | |
| 1.1 | Welcome and introductions were made by LW. LW welcomed Sophie Pring, the new Teacher Councillor. | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest | |
| 2.1 | There were no updates to declarations of interest. | |
| 3 | Governance | |
| 3.1 | Membership – LW advised councillors of a new prospective councillor. | |
| 3.2 | Training – <u>ACTION: Clerk will liaise with one councillor to support with login difficulties.</u> | LC |
| 4 | Minutes of Previous Meeting | |
| 4.1 | Minutes of the meeting held 19 October 2021 were agreed as accurate. | |
| 5 | Matters Arising | |
| 5.1 | <p>Completed actions were agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 LW will review link roles with councillors in separate meeting – LW apologised as the meeting did not take place. <u>ACTION: LW will arrange meeting to discuss.</u> 3.3 All councillors to complete Governance Essentials on Nimble - see Item 3.2. 5.1 <u>ACTION: taken forward - JS to share arguments captured from pupil voice re wellbeing, socialisation and mixing with people with councillors.</u> | <p>LW</p> <p>JS</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Councillors to visit their school link and complete visit form – LW thanked councillors for their reports and emphasised the importance of recording visits/conversations. 6.2.1 JS will share staff structure with councillors – See item 8.4 | |
| 6 | Councillor Visit Reports | |
| 6.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors noted the SEND Link Visit Report from MG which had been shared. See Item 10.14. LF had undertaken a Pupil Premium Link visit and will send the visit report to the clerk for sharing with council on Teams. <u>ACTION: LF to send visit report to clerk</u> | LF |
| 7 | Pupil Voice | |
| 7.1 | <p>ND updated on pupil voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the pupil voice day this term is 10 December; Ambassador group – children have applied for positions for Frome Vale jobs and counted democracy question votes; Wellbeing group –an action plan has been created which includes providing a place children can go if they feel left out or have no one to play with and there had also been a focus on more collaboration in lessons/school/art activities/art or sport. Year 6 are now reading with Year 2 and pupil premium children and there is a bench that children can sit by if they need help or support at playtime. Children had also voted for storage for scooters and for a pedometer challenge to be more active. EDI group – two suggestions; international day with possible invite at end of day for parents and a big board of non-English words. In addition; an assembly run by EDI reps, looking at singing a song in another language to celebrate; a language survey which will display results as a pictogram and a big map of the world so that children can identify where they are from. E Safety is focussing on raising awareness around popular games and applications; children decided this was a priority as children are accessing games out of their age range and they want to highlight safety around that. Learning Champions have been reminded about certificates each week and how they are awarded and announced in assembly. They have discussed history and learning in class and what they think about learning. Eco Warriors have met and are working towards the Green Flag Award; they have identified the weaknesses we have towards becoming an eco-school which has included highlighting the use of single use plastics; they will be writing to parents around a ban. | |
| | Questions/comments from Academy Council | |
| 7.2 | <p>How are you approaching the discussion around the ban on single-use plastics? There are some areas where single-use plastics may still be needed such as where families cannot afford alternatives – I would want to make sure those areas are highlighted to pupils.</p> | |
| 7.2.1 | <p>The children are leading on this and want to work towards using sustainable alternatives however the teacher who runs the group is aware and would encourage consideration and discussion on the points you raise; this is about being inclusive to families and the children talk about this. Councillors are welcome to come and join us in that discussion.</p> | |

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| 7.3 | Is there a stigma for children sitting on the bench waiting for support? How would you support children who find it difficult to make friends? | |
| 7.3.1 | I don't believe there would be a stigma to sitting on the bench; because we have such an inclusive community it is very rare that you have peer on peer abuse. Our children are confident and are encouraged to seek adult support if there is a problem. The adults on duty can spot immediately when something is not quite right as we know our children so well. Discussions around friendships are covered through PSHE and with individual discussions and encouragement. | |
| 8 | Staffing and Wellbeing | |
| 8.1 | ND updated that the academy is advertising again as they have not yet been able to recruit an SMSA (School Meals Supervisory Assistant). There is also an advert out currently to recruit for another member to the Early Years team. | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 8.2 | How is staff wellbeing and how are staff coping moving into Term 2? | |
| 8.2.1 | Term 2 is a very busy term for teachers so teachers can find it a hard term. | |
| 8.3 | How have new staff settled in and are there any staffing concerns in general? | |
| 8.3.1 | The new teachers and teaching assistant have settled in well. ND explained the process of induction into the Frome Vale way which has been successful. | |
| 8.4 | Is there a staff organisational chart available? | |
| 8.4.1 | <u>ACTION: ND will share a staff structure chart with councillors</u> | ND |
| 8.5 | Could something similar be shared with parents as not all parents know staff in the academy? | |
| 8.5.1 | Covid restrictions have had an impact on communications with parents which might have impacted on this. <u>ACTION: ND will organise staff structure for parents.</u> | ND |
| | Academy Council Report | |
| 9 | Quality of Education | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 9.1 | What are the bright spots and are there any particular areas of concern around curriculum development? | |
| 9.1.2 | The curriculum is growing, being evolved and checked all the time. History is a huge bright spot and there is a focus on reasoning in Maths. Music is also being developed. | |
| 9.2 | How does it link in with the CLF core curriculum? Can you extend it? | |
| 9.2.1 | The CLF curriculum was written with CLF teacher specialists – the content is the minimum of what our children should cover; we are able to extend, led by children's learning. | |
| 9.3 | How does the academy's extra-curricular programme go beyond what is expected and support our most disadvantaged learners to engage with their talents and interests? | |
| 9.3.1 | We have sent out a questionnaire to find out what talents and interests they have that the academy can help to develop further? We will plan our support from the responses. | |

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| 10 | Achievements and Standards | |
| 10.1 | Outcomes Data for the end of term 1 had been shared. It was noted that Year 6 are currently sitting mock SATS papers. | |
| 10.2 | Attendance ND explained that attendance was 96% however it had dipped over the last 2 days as there has been increased absence. Discussion followed around the current requirements and processes for Covid and absence around that. | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 10.3 | Is there a noticeable difference with attendance for Pupil Premium children? | |
| 10.3.1 | There is no trend at present. | |
| 10.4 | What actions are there to support Pupil Premium children's absence? | |
| 10.4.1 | ND described the process for all children who are absent. There is no difference in support for PP children; actions are taken to support individual children and families. | |
| 10.5 | What is the process for children with Covid symptoms? Lateral flow tests are thought to be more accurate, is it possible for children to take lateral flow tests in school? | |
| 10.5.1 | We follow the CLF guidelines. Lateral flow tests in school would be more complicated for primary school children however we try to make everything as straightforward as possible for testing at home to ensure there are no barriers for children coming to school. | |
| 10.6 | Are the requirements around Covid for staff and children to stay at home having an impact on the delivery of lessons? | |
| 10.6.1 | It is not impacting on learning at present; if teachers are out then pupils can access the Love of Learning. There are no staff absent currently and none have tested positive. It has been difficult to find supply teachers but if a teacher tests positive we will not send that cohort home; the class will be covered – I covered a class this week. There are children who have tested positive (x codes) across all year groups. Whole classes are not required to stay at home and children don't have to isolate if there is a positive test in the household; we request daily lateral flow and pupils can still come to school. Whilst it isn't having an impact on the provision of learning it does have an impact on children's wellbeing; we are focussed on providing support and reassurance. | |
| 10.7 | What is the policy on children being absent if both parents are positive and they can't bring them to school? | |
| 10.7.1 | Discussions would be around the possibility of someone else bringing the child to school and we would provide every opportunity for that child to access learning. | |
| 10.8 | I notice that less than half of parents are wearing masks at pick up time – is it possible for you to be on the gate to reinforce that message? | |
| 10.8.1 | Extra restrictions have only just been introduced; JS and I are wearing face coverings at the gate which will model mask wearing going forward. Due to the | |

| Item | Description | Action |
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| | increased restrictions we have taken the decision to cancel the Winter market and the school are not meeting in big groups. ACTION: ND/JS will remind parents to wear masks at pick up/drop off. | ND/JS |
| 10.9 | Behaviour and Attitudes Councillors noted the information in the Academy Council Report that behaviour in school is at least good and information regarding two exclusions so far this term. ND provided further explanation of the background to the exclusions and the process of applying for an EHCP which currently is taking between 20 and 52 weeks. HA commented that the academy had done a great job of putting things in place and have a plan of action which is really good. | |
| 10.10 | Pupil Premium and CiC | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 10.11 | There is an increase in spending this year on 1:1 interventions - are there any other changes from last year's Pupil Premium spending? | |
| 10.11.1 | We have thought about what we need to do to have the greatest impact for our families and our strategy is to provide support on an individual basis e.g. support with PE kit or the provide opportunities for equity of experience to access the learning. | |
| 10.12 | Is there still Catch -Up funding? | |
| 10.12.1 | It is only a small amount this year – spending has included an additional teaching assistant. | |
| 10.13 | On weeks where there is a gap between Pupil Premium and Non-Pupil Premium attendance has it been possible to identify why that is? | |
| 10.13.1 | There is no real difference between Pupil Premium and non-Pupil Premium as to how to approach non-attendance – we always go above and beyond for every single child to identify the barriers and provide support. | |
| 10.14 | SEND The Term 1 SEND Report and the Link Councillor Report had been shared. | |
| | Questions/comments from Academy Council | |
| 10.15 | How are you supporting children on the SEN Register with assessments? | |
| 10.15.1 | We run a programme of mock testing throughout the year so all children are familiar with testing; children with SEND have the same tests and are supported individually to remove barriers and apply for additional time for those that need it. | |
| 10.16 | How we are recognising lost learning for children on the SEN Register and understanding how they fit into the disadvantage category? | |
| 10.16.1 | We are being more forensic in the way we approach the learning of those children. During progress sessions there is a lot of discussion around what is going to remove the barrier and how are you going to do that so that it becomes at the forefront of teachers minds when planning their sessions. We also use speech and language therapy, educational psychologists and the school nurse to make assessments. There are Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for children who need tight succinct direct learning. We are also currently developing a way in which children are added to the SEN register more efficiently and focussing on Quality First teaching as this has the most impact for children. | |

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| 10.17 | We don't currently have any Looked After Children or Children in Care at Frome Vale. | |
| 11 | Health and Safety | |
| 11.1 | HA updated on the Health and Safety Committee meeting which had been held earlier. A new Site Manager has been appointed. There were no major updates; one of the CLF Heads of Compliance had attended the meeting and commented on the low Covid cases, praising the cleaning regime and precautions in place. There are no major works over the Christmas holidays so staff and site staff will be able to have a break. | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 11.2 | How are the increased restrictions affecting staff morale? | |
| 11.2.1 | It is difficult to answer as it has only impacted in the last 24/48 hours. At present I don't feel there are people who are over anxious around it; we are reminding staff about the support programme, about masks and giving staff plenty of opportunity to let us know of any concerns. | |
| 12 | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | |
| 12.1 | JA (EDI Link Councillor) updated that, due to the extra restrictions, the Community Market event for December had unfortunately had to be postponed to January. There had been various groups covering EDI (pupils/community); there is now one group which meets, with everyone doing their own speciality which is progressing well. EDI is about community and meeting people which is not possible at present; although the group is doing what it can do online. Feedback from recent surveys on EDI was excellent, showing that everybody felt included in school. The majority of comments were really positive; they felt they were being treated fairly, justly and treated like a family. | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 12.2 | One of the new democracy questions is whether we should celebrate all religious festivals equally - if children say yes what would this look like? It will be important to be clear about the difference between learning and celebrating other religions; the wording will be important to be respectful of everyone's religions as religions are not supposed to celebrate other religions. | |
| 12.2.1 | ND explained that it will require careful planning; we will be celebrating and looking at what other religions do so that everyone can understand others more. It will be about the Frome Vale community as a whole coming together to learn. We will keep councillors informed as plans develop. | |
| 13 | Safeguarding | |
| 13.1 | The Annual Safeguarding Report and Term1 Report had been shared. LW had met with the DSL. Councillors noted the reports. | |
| 14 | Policies | |
| 14.1 | The CLF Exclusions Policy and Admissions Policy for 2023/24 were noted . | |
| 15 | Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC | |
| 15.1 | None. | |
| 16 | AOB | |
| | Questions from Academy Council | |
| 16.1 | Have we had any feedback from parents in general recently? | |

| Item | Description | Action |
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| 16.1.1 | Recent feedback had been lovely – lots of families have been really positive. <u>ACTION: ND will arrange for data to be shared with councillors.</u> | ND |
| 16.2 | What support is being given to teachers and staff in preparation for an Ofsted visit? | |
| 16.2.1 | We have provided support to ensure staff are clear about particular areas. | |
| 16.3 | Are there any areas of potential weakness you are concerned about and need extra focus? | |
| 16.3.1 | We are in a strong place – we have provided guidance and preparation for teachers. | |
| 16.4 | What ways could you celebrate and create conversation about commonality, for example playground games from other cultures? | |
| 16.4.1 | Being a Frome Vale Citizen is what drives that commonality. I will ask Mr Fossard to include this in the EDI Group. <u>ACTION: ND will ask Mr Fossard to add how to celebrate and create conversation around commonality to the EDI Group.</u> | ND |
| 16.5 | What plans are there for the 70th anniversary of the estate; as a local person I would like to be involved? | |
| 16.5.1 | There are plans for the anniversary. <u>ACTION: ND will request JS to update councillors on plans for the 70th anniversary of the estate.</u> | ND |

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Next meetings:

5.00 pm - 8 Feb, 5 Apr, 5 July