

Minutes – John Cabot Academy Council

Meeting Date: 8 October 2024
Location: John Cabot Academy
Time: 4.30 pm

Present: Linda Tanner (LT) Chair of Academy Council
 Kate Willis (KW) Principal
 Andrea Duignan (AD) Parent Academy Councillor
 Simon Horn (SH) Support Staff Councillor
 King Egwu (KE) Sponsor Academy Councillor
 Angela Long (AL) Sponsor Academy Councillor
 Georgina Tankard (GT) Sponsor Academy Councillor

Attendees: Charlotte Seavill (CS) Clerk
 Lynne Magee (LM) Senior Operations Manager

Apologies: Matthew Fincher (MF) LA Representative Councillor
 Wendy Hellin (WH) Clerk
 Jon Jones (JJ) Executive Principal

Not in attendance: Nigel Eaton (NE) Sponsor Academy Councillor
 Samira Musse (SM) Parent Academy Councillor

Action Table:

Item No	Action	Owner
06.12.23 02	LT will discuss link roles for Attendance and RHSE with Georgina and Angela and email councillors regarding a link role for EDI. These are being rationalised by the central governance team and will be reviewed in September. 8th Oct 2024 – action now complete.	LT

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introduction, Administration and Apologies	
1.1	Welcome and introductions were made. Apologies were received from JJ, MF & GT. LM left at 17.21. KE joined at 17.30.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no verbal declarations of interest made for this meeting.	
3	Governance	
3.1	Membership/Links	
3.1.1	ACTION: WH to contact Oonagh Wisener-Walsh regarding recruitment to the Academy Council	WH
3.1.2	This was SH's last meeting and the Academy Council thanked him for his support and dedication, and wished him well for the future.	

	WH has resigned as Clerk and will be leaving in November so the Academy Council also thanked her for her support and guidance and wished her well.	
3.1.3	Councillors discussed the recent constitution changes, the changes to link roles and the reasons behind the decisions. LM continues to organise lanyards for Academy Councillors and will distribute at the next meeting.	
3.2	Training	
3.2.1	Councillors have been sent links to the necessary training modules and reminded of the deadline to complete these by the end of term.	
4	Minutes of the previous meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held 10 July 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
5	Matters Arising	
5.1	The action table above has been updated.	
6	Academy Council Report	
6.1	Achievements and Standards	
6.1.1	KW gave an update on recent changes to Ofsted and discussed the likelihood of an inspection this academic year.	
6.1.2	Councillors discussed the shared URN between JCA and P16, how this impacts an inspection and suggested a joint meeting in the near future to discuss inspection preparation. ACTION: LT & KW	LT/KW
6.1.3	ACTION: KW to elaborate on safeguarding in the executive summary of the Ofsted paper.	KW
6.1.4	Councillors discussed staff delivering lessons outside of their subject specialisms, how often it is happening and the use of supply teachers. Councillors were reassured by the infrequent nature of non-specialist teaching and the support in place for those involved where it does happen.	
6.1.5	The AIP was discussed, included the introduction of a new approach to lesson cover. Councillors discussed the current cover supervisors in place and sought feedback from other schools who approach cover lessons in the same way.	
6.1.6	Councillors discussed the decrease in suspensions and the number of suspensions for specific student groups, in particular SEND K.	
6.1.7	Q: What are the reasons for suspensions in this cohort?	
6.1.8	A: Unmet need manifests itself in many ways. We have been really successful in securing EHCPs for students, but for those in need of AP, there aren't enough spaces available locally. For those students who are unlikely to ever gain a place in an alternative provision, we need to cater for their needs by offering a mixed approach to learning and education. Where this has been successful, we are seeing a decrease in the number of suspensions issued. Councillors discussed the types of timetables and provisions put in place to support students in more detail following a case study example. There are also 8 students receiving Hospital Education and this number is slowly increasing due to an increase in anxiety and ESBA.	
6.1.9	Q: Are the alternative provisions used registered?	
6.1.10	A: Not always, but we follow a robust internal QA process for all providers.	
6.1.11	Q: How is AP funded?	
6.1.12	A: KW described the funding available for schools, the notional £6000 paid by the school prior to additional funding being requested and the removal of top-up funding over recent years from both Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council.	
6.2	Vision and Values	

6.2.1	This paper was shared prior to the meeting and read and understood by Councillors.	
6.3	Communication and Bromcom Launch	
6.3.1	<p>KW provided some context around the focus on parental communication following the last Ofsted report. Since then, a communications policy has been written, in collaboration with parents, including the mechanisms for the sharing of key information.</p> <p>JCA previously used the MIS SIMS but has recently moved to the Trust-wide MIS, BromCom. While using SIMS, parents had access to an app where information was shared instantaneously with those who used the app. This ceased when BromCom was implemented. The academy is now in a position to launch the BromCom equivalent app, My Child at School (MCAS). LG described the work undertaken to get to this point and the parameters for what will be shared via the app.</p> <p>Due to the sharing of the database with CLF P16, both settings need to approach the information shared and the communication permissions in the same way. Currently P16 allow direct communications between staff and parents, which contrasts with how staff and parents currently communicate at JCA.</p> <p>The Academy Council was invited to share their thoughts on the communication permissions via the app.</p> <p>Councillors shared concerns around workload and wellbeing, setting clear expectations around response times and the tone of communications, staff training on the system and app.</p>	
6.3.2	Q: How do staff feel about this type of parental communication method?	
6.3.3	A: There is a session prepared for INSET day to understand staff voice on this.	
6.3.4	Q: Have parents missed the SIMS app? Was it well used? What about those who prefer not to, or don't know how to use apps?	
6.3.5	<p>A: Anecdotally, it was well used and staff found it helpful to deliver messages that might otherwise have needed a phone call.</p> <p>It won't be used as our only form of communication so parents who don't use the app will receive information in other ways.</p>	
6.3.6	Q: Does it have a translation function as 39% of our students have EAL so we wouldn't want it to be barrier to receiving information.	
6.3.7	<u>ACTION: KW to check if MCAS has a translation function.</u>	<u>KW</u>
6.3.8	<u>ACTION: KW to look into the possibility of parental coffee mornings</u>	<u>KW</u>
6.3.9	Councillors discussed the implementation timeline and logins for whole families rather than individual students, and parental information being updated via the app.	
6.4	Attendance	
6.4.1	Attendance is currently above national average and remains strong in comparison with other local and CLF schools. There has been an impact due to term time holiday.	
6.4.2	Q: Do you receive attendance information from primary schools so that you can identify trends early?	
6.4.3	A: No, but we do usually know from primary schools who has concerning attendance. We visit every Y6 teacher at every feeder school to understand our incoming students and start TAC meetings prior to their first day.	
7	Safeguarding	
7.1	Safeguarding Report	
7.1.1	Councillors discussed the ongoing concerns around student vaping and related internal truancy.	
7.1.2	The draft annual safeguarding report was shared. There are final updates to make by the DSL and AL (<u>ACTION</u>).	<u>AL</u>

7.1.3	A new DSL has been appointed and will be starting shortly. Councillors discussed the staffing structure for safeguarding in the academy, the recent feedback from the Trust Safeguarding team and funding for staffing in this area.	
7.1.4	<u>ACTION: Councillors requested Steve Bane's attendance a future AC meeting.</u>	<u>WH/K</u> <u>W</u>
8	Finance, Health & Safety and Estates	
8.1	Councillors were reassured that the academy has set a balanced budget for this academic year that will meet business rules. There was a small surplus last year that was spent in various ways including new lighting for the astro pitch, textbooks, resources and PE equipment. Pupil numbers increased early in the term so the census return was impacted positively, and pupil numbers remain strong.	
8.2	It was recommended that, following a recent fall by a Councillor, that an automatic light is fitted in the area. Details are recorded in the accident book.	
8.3	Improvements have been made to the estate, which have been well received by students. Lots of lighting has been updated, including the main hall, thanks to a grant received from the Government. Councillors suggested future investigation of smart metres and solar panels.	
8.4	Councillors discussed recent damage to toilets and the mitigations in place to avoid future recurrence.	
9	EDI	
9.1	Equality mark – Councillors felt the EDI plan for the year was very clear.	
10	Staff Wellbeing	
10.1	Councillors discussed the two staff surveys shared last year, the most recent of which was quite poorly completed but overwhelmingly positive. Councillors were assured that there is well developed wellbeing and mental health support in place for staff.	
11	Other Link Councillor Reports	
11.1	Councillors agreed their link roles for the year as follows: SEND – GT (including a focus on attendance) Safeguarding – AL Careers – NE Disadvantage – AD Councillors would also like a link for EDI (TBC in the next meeting) and Health & Safety (MF). It was agreed that RSHE sits within Safeguarding.	
11.2	<u>ACTION: WH to add EDI link role in the next agenda for discussion.</u>	WH
11.3	Councillors delivered and celebrated AL's Heart Award, recently awarded for her dedication to safeguarding at JCA, her continued work and contributions to governance.	
12	Policies	
12.1	The Academy Council received the following policies: Academy for approval: Behaviour Policy Children In Care Policy Communications Policy JCA Safeguarding Policy Self Harm Policy	

	CLF Policies to note: Health and Safety Policy Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy All policies will be approved or noted offline via email by LT. (ACTION)	LT
13	Risk Register	
13.1	This has been covered within the AC report. Key risks were highlighted and discussed including lone working apps, subject performance and union activity. Councillors were supportive and offered advice on various subjects.	
14	Matters for the attention of the Board /COAC	
14.1	No matters for the board or COAC were raised.	
15	Any Other Business	
15.1	None.	

The meeting closed at 6.30pm

Actions carried forward:

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3.1.1	ACTION: WH to contact Oonagh Wisener-Walsh regarding recruitment to the Academy Council	WH
6.3.7	ACTION: KW to check if MCAS has a translation function.	KW
6.3.8	ACTION: KW to look into the possibility of parental coffee mornings	KW
6.1.2	Councillors discussed the shared URN between JCA and P16 and how this impacts an inspection and suggested a joint meeting in the near future to discuss inspection preparation. ACTION: LT & KW	LT/KW
6.1.3	ACTION: KW to add elaborate on safeguarding in the executive summary of the Ofsted paper.	KW
7.1.2	The draft annual report was shared. There are final updates to make by the DSL and AL (ACTION).	AL
7.1.4	ACTION: Councillors requested Steve Bane attends a future AC meeting.	WH/KW
11.2	ACTION: WH to add EDI link role in the next agenda for discussion.	WH
12.1	All policies will be approved or noted offline via email by LT. (ACTION)	LT

Next meetings:

Mtg 3 - Mon 9 December 24, 4.30pm

Mtg 4 - Weds 5 March 25, 4.30pm

Mtg 5 - Weds 23 April, 4.30pm

Mtg 6 - Weds 25 June 25, 4.30pm

Strategic Working Group meetings (8.15am - 10 am, Board Room at John Cabot Academy)

8th November 2024

17th January 2025

28th March 2025

23rd May 2025