

Minutes – John Cabot Academy Council

Meeting Date:	2 March 2022	
Location:	Teams – online meeting	
Time:	4.30 pm	
Present:	Linda Tanner (LT)	Chair of Academy Council
	Kate Willis (KW)	Principal
	Alison Evans (AE)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Angela Long (AL)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Scott Raybould (SR)	Parent Academy Councillor
	Simon Horn (SH)	Support Staff Councillor
	Veronica Mastrandrea (VM)	Teacher Academy Councillor
Attendees:	Linda Corbidge (LC)	Clerk to Academy Council
	Charlotte Grierson (CG)	Drama Lead
	Lucy Barraclough (LB)	Hospitality & Catering and Art Lead
	Claire Dutton (CD)	Humanities Lead
	Jane Day (JD)	Senior Operations Manager
Apologies:	Holly Vickers (HV)	Student Advocate Academy Councillor
	Fiona Thompson (FT)	Parent Academy Councillor
	Dan Nicholls (DN)	Executive Principal
	Nigel Eaton (NE)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Georgina Tankard (GT)	Sponsor Academy Councillor

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions	
1.1	Welcome and introductions were made by LT. The meeting is noted as quorate.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	Councillors were requested to complete the form to update September declarations. <u>ACTION: Councillors to ensure they have completed the update to declarations (contact clerk for link if required).</u>	ALL
3	Academy Council Membership	
3.1	Membership LA Representative vacancy – LT reported that in order to aim to increase diversity on the council, KW is following up with someone from Somali families who is working at JCA to promote the role in the community.	
3.2	Link Roles – it was agreed that AE will be RHSE link. Careers link to be advised after further discussion.	
3.3	Training – it was noted that councillors had received advice of CLF Governance Training on 17 th March. LT had fed back that this was short notice.	

3.4	Strategic Working Group – topics discussed had been recruitment into Year 7 and update on Year 11 exam changes this year due to Covid. Case studies were also looked at to unpick data in last council meeting.	
3.5	How do staff feel within the school about the updates for exams? They will be somewhat helpful to target revision.	
3.6	How is recruitment into Year 7 going? We are at 166 for a PAN (published admission number) of 180 which is a significant improvement on numbers to this time last year. The current Year 7 started at 150 and is now at 168 and I am relatively hopeful numbers we will reach 180 by September, although there is a need to attract more first choices.	
3.7	How many are first choices and what are we doing to increase the number of first choices? There are 110 first choices, nearly 200 second choices. Reputationally we need to keep working on this. We expect the work taking place with primaries to improve first choices; this includes groups from Year 5 coming in from local primaries to watch a performance. If there is anything councillors can do to support recruitment please let us know.	
4	Minutes of the previous meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday 8 December 2021 were agreed as a true record.	
5	Matters Arising	
5.1	<i>5.1.1 Councillors to arrange a visit to their links in school before the next meeting and send visit reports to KW/LC</i> – AL reported on her Safeguarding link visit on 2 February – highlighting that the restructure of the pastoral system has helped the Safeguarding Lead (see AL note attached to minutes). AL will be attending Safety Day on 22 March which has a focus on vaping and substance abuse. KW said that she is really pleased to see the closer link between safeguarding need and what is being delivered on Safety Day. <u>ACTION: KW will email Safety Day Agenda to all councillors</u>	KW
5.2	<i>13.1 LT/KW to look at the Risk Register and update</i> <u>ACTION: LT and KW will meet to look at the Risk Register before the next meeting.</u>	LT/KW
5.3	All other actions were agreed as completed.	
6	Elective Home Education	
6.1	KW explained the process for Elective Home Education highlighting that following a request for home education, the academy cannot refuse the request. KW always meets with the parent to try to support students back into school. KW shared an example of a letter to a parent – it was noted it included a lot of information. KW shared anonymised case studies for the 6 children whose families have elected for home education, explaining the significant and complex reasons for each case. Numbers are higher than previously. Councillors commented that almost all were in Year 9.	
6.2	Could the academy pay for uniforms if the reason is that a family didn't want to pay for uniforms? In that particular case the uniform issue wasn't the only factor. KW explained further factors regarding reluctance for child to start a new school for a short time in Year 7 before moving house/school.	
6.3	How are home educated students assessed or inspected to ensure their needs are met, especially for vulnerable children? It is the LA's responsibility once they are home educated – we always ensure the LA are fully informed. AE commented that she had asked at South Gloucestershire Council and was reassured that home educated students are visited in person, and all children had been visited or been checked on. Councillors commented on the need to make more than one visit.	

	<p>Post meeting note from KW: LA role in supporting Elective Home Education - Clear guidance in section 5.4 of this document for the role of the local authority. Section 7 explains what they do in the event of safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791527/Elective_home_education_guidance_for_LAV2.0.pdf</p>	
6.4	<p>Is there any reason why students are mainly Year 9 – or is it because Year 9s were Year 7s when Covid started?</p> <p>We have never had these numbers before – it is not just education that has been disrupted by Covid but also external services.</p>	
6.5	<p>Is it the same in other CLF schools?</p> <p>We are marginally higher in the number of cases. Quite a lot of students in Year 9 move to Digitech Studio School, which is smaller.</p>	
6.6	<p>Is anyone following up on the student whose family did not engage with the academy?</p> <p>We are aware that the student is at another CLF school and wants to come back to JCA.</p> <p>Councillors commented that they were reassured that the academy has a process in place – KW commented that the academy are rigorous in informing the LA.</p>	
7	Staff Wellbeing	
7.1	<p>LT asked staff present for their views on staff wellbeing.</p> <p>Most of the staff have been feeling under pressure in Term 3– it has felt like the hardest term however we are feeling better after half term and ready to go. Councillors recognised that Term 3 had been difficulty, commenting that it was reassuring to hear that staff are feeling better after half term. Further information will be presented on staff wellbeing at the next meeting.</p>	
7.2	<p>Are JCA staff aware of what CLF wellbeing initiatives are on offer?</p> <p>I can't give you information on staff who have accessed the blogs/apps and the wellbeing programme however when I work with staff individually many access the CLF support programmes. The programmes are also often referenced by line managers at all levels as a mechanism for support. One significant change we have made is that we now have a Staff Wellbeing Lead who has had mental health first aid training and each week posts something on wellbeing.</p>	
	Academy Council Report	
8	Quality of Education	
8.1	<p><i>Academy Council Report, SEF, AIP and AIP Summary had been shared.</i></p> <p>Presentations were made by Leaders of Hospitality & Catering and Art, RP and Drama which are areas to watch.</p>	
8.2	<p>Art</p> <p>LB shared historical and current data, and highlighted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staffing situation in Art and the reasons for the change from the Art Craft & Design course to Fine Art. - A lot of practical time has been lost and to boost students work - we are offering after school sessions, which are also open to Year 10. - Early marking had been completed to enable targeting of students. Staff know the students well, what they need to do and are giving them the opportunities to do that. - The current Year 10 has a class size of 30 which needs to be kept consistent i.e. allowing less changes to option subjects. 	
8.3	<p>Hospitality and Catering</p> <p>LB shared data, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The necessity to change from GCSE with an experienced teacher to a new specification Food Preparation vocational course as the GCSE is no longer being available. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This area has been hugely impacted by Covid; the current Year 11 have not been able to complete any practical since Year 9. - The only exam board consideration this year is that students can cook one dish instead of two. Although students can take the exam three times, there are thirteen coursework modules which students must pass. Many think this is unfair; there have been complaints about it and in 2023 the course is going to change. - Predictions will be clearer when we receive the January results shortly. - There is a discrepancy with the data as the data does not tally with the grading system of GCSE – this has been flagged with the CLF data team. - There has been staff illness this term – LB has taken on classes 	
8.4	<p>How do you communicate to students the expectations around completing the coursework? We explain the importance of every unit, which is broken down into sections.</p>	
8.5	<p>Do you think it would have helped if they had made more adaptations to the exam element? It would be more helpful to have had adaptations to coursework as students can take the exam three times.</p>	
8.6	<p>Are you teaching the group? I have been teaching the course due to sickness – I taught it years ago and know the content. Jo Shipp has now returned and has after school sessions planned.</p>	
8.7	<p>Humanities - RP CD shared historical data, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There has been a significant decrease shown in the data in 2022 following a slight dip in 2021 as the group has been significantly impacted by Covid. Pupil Premium students were particularly affected in 2021 due to issues with IT to access lessons and mocks. - Predictions for 2022 are significantly lower mainly due to the new course which has been changed to bring it into alignment with others in CLF. The teacher is very experienced and is giving students a phenomenal level of support. - A key issue is that sections of the RP course have not been cut out as in other courses. The teacher attended training before half term and has now got better guidance on how to help students to get the marks – students will need to be taught right up to the exam. - Data overall shows a significant increase for HAPs. SEN K students seems to be struggling the most. - Actions taken include scaffolding focus to stretch HAPs, SEN access, revision packs for all, learning walks focussing on SEND, inclusive classrooms, student engagement. 	
8.8	<p>How much time and training were given to the teacher before the change of course? There was a handover of materials and conversations at the federation network meetings. Due to staff changes in the federation, the course the teacher attended before half term is the first significant guidance.</p>	
8.9	<p>How is the teacher's wellbeing? He cares about his students; with mock exam timetable it is difficult to fit in additional time and as a result he is concerned at the quality he is going to be able to deliver. Previously the RP exam was first, so students benefited from not having to revise for all exams around the time of the RP exam, this time exams are spread out so this could make a significant difference to results.</p>	
8.10	<p>Why was the course changed? It was part of a move with CLF to ensure all exams are delivered by the same exam board. KW explained that it is the right course of action as the teacher is now 1 of 8 teachers using Eduqas so all help plan the curriculum. This is the last year as all exam boards are now aligned.</p>	
8.11	<p>Can the teacher seek support from others in the federation, and does he have time to do that? Yes, time is allocated through Federation Network Nights (FNN).</p>	
8.12	<p>How many students are there in the group? 25.</p>	
8.13	<p>How does the teacher feel about all the learning walk scrutiny? Are we looking after him?</p>	

	<p>We have a long-established programme of learning walks which are developmental and about improving practice. The teacher is not stressed about learning walks, it is more personal pressure. We check in with each other.</p> <p>Councillors acknowledged that the long-term impact of Covid and late change to specifications is extra pressure on teachers.</p>	
8.14	<p>Drama – Charlotte Grierson</p> <p>CG shared historical data showing improved projected performance, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drama has underperformed over last few years - Different course options had been considered however the decision was made to keep existing course due to existing expertise. - Staff are now more confident following training/work within CLF and colleagues across Bristol on three components. - Year 11 have a bespoke plan to progress. - We can see a lot of improvement in books, in depth understanding, strong teaching practice and learning in lessons. - The QA and actions for Curriculum Team Improvement Plan in Term 4, include exam questions, exam technique, verbal and written feedback. - We need to be better at providing more opportunities for the students to respond to feedback. 	
8.15	<p>How many students are in the group, and how many teachers are teaching at GCSE level?</p> <p>Year 11 - 20, Year 10 - 23. They are large groups compared to others in the Trust. Two teachers are teaching at GCSE level.</p>	
9	Achievement and Standards	
9.1	<p>Feedback from Scrutiny</p> <p>KW highlighted recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reputation and reach – actions being taken on recruitment - Disadvantage – we believe we are firmly a good school and therefore have the opportunity to start building on that and thinking about focussing on key curriculum areas English and Maths to move to outstanding. - Language teaching – we have appointed a really strong experienced head of MFL who will start shortly. <p>LT commented that she had been impressed at the Scrutiny meeting.</p>	
9.2	<p>Attendance</p> <p>Councillors noted the report. KW explained the role of the EOI (similar to Education Welfare Officer) in supporting the academy with attendance, panels and prosecutions.</p>	
9.3	<p>Behaviour</p> <p>It is encouraging to see behaviour incidents declining and fewer exclusions. There are quite a lot of FTERPS - students transferring to other academies in the Trust. Is that the reason why numbers have gone down?</p> <p>Yes, we much prefer to transfer students because they are safe in a school learning. Ideally, we would like to be in a school where there are no exclusions. We would like a resource in-school where we can send children; this is in the plan but we are not there yet.</p>	
9.4	<p>Pupil Premium</p> <p>What incentives are you offering Pupil Premium students to attend after school clubs?</p> <p>Following the request at the last AC meeting for student voice on clubs that students might like, students want more mixed gender sports clubs e.g. badminton which has started this term. Regarding other clubs requested it is up to staff who want to offer their time. We need to increase promotion of the clubs in lower years and actively get tutors to reach out to PP children to encourage to attend.</p>	

	KS4 clubs – I have put a real challenge to curriculum teams about PP attendance at KS4 clubs being disproportionately low	
9.5	Can we offer lunchtime clubs? No because of split lunches. Mr Church has a classroom open at lunchtime as revision space.	
9.6	Personal development There are areas of low expectation around delivery of the PSHE curriculum which relates to tutor time. We now have the capacity to make this a priority – Steve Church (SC) is doing a fantastic job of making sure tutor time has a clear planned activity. This is a hugely valuable part of our day for students, to be reactive and also ensure we deliver elements of SMSC. Tutor News - notices for students appear in a bulletin and are read out every day which is a huge reduction in workload for staff. SC completed QA to ensure teachers are following the plan and we now feel we are there in terms of compliance however quality needs more focus as it is not the same quality as other lessons.	
9.7	Do you have any refugees from Afghanistan and are the LA providing support? Yes, we currently have three families from Afghanistan that we are working with but we don't qualify for any support. Some are LAC so have Virtual School support. Is this the same for Bristol City Council? <u>ACTION: KW will share details of refugees for AE to follow up on support at S. Glos Council and will ask JJ to come to the next SWG to talk about cases.</u> Post meeting note: Details of students/support is in the meeting folder in Teams.	KW
9.8	SEND A questionnaire was sent out to parents to encourage students with special needs to attend clubs – how is that going? SEN K is probably the group that is now top most in our minds – this is the group where attendance is the worst - almost all of stage 4 students are SENK. These students absolutely need EHCPs but for whatever reason the education system has allowed them to fall through the gaps. This is an area that we are working on at present and where the hub is involved working really closely with parents all the time. More broadly we have not done enough to engage parents of SENK pupils and we will work on that.	
10	Safeguarding	
10.1	Has the new counsellor started yet? She has been appointed and starts in the next two weeks.	
10.2	Is that for the same hours as the previous counsellor and is it in addition to Mental Health funding? Yes, it's not full time it is for the same hours as previously. Councils have recognised the huge issues with mental health – we have funding for a colleague who provides one day of lower level counselling and one day for planning support. As South Glos we also have access to a Thrive App which was launched with parents and students just before half term.	
10.3	In Term 2 anxiety and panic attacks increased significantly - is there anything put in place to support children with more anxiety they may have with what is happening in Ukraine? Yes, SC has put together a really good series of tutor sessions this week which are factual, acknowledge emotion and crucially show how to access reliable information.	
11	Policies	
11.1	Policies to: Academy Approve: Attendance, Safeguarding, RHSE CLF Note/Adopt: CLF FOI and Complaints, Exclusions & Suspensions, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions <u>ACTION: LT will look at policies outside the meeting and email clerk for noting approval.</u> Post meeting note: LT <u>approved</u> the policies Attendance, Safeguarding, RHSE subject to small amendments noted by academy.	LT
12	Matters for the attention of the Board /COAC	

12.1	None.	
13	AOB	
13.1	<p>Having recently attended an EDI workshop (AL) it would be good to hear from students on what is happening at JCA. Are the equalities policies we have enough to make a difference?</p> <p>We will look at this at the next meeting. Our students have starred in a film by Integrate.</p> <p><u>ACTION: KW will share link to film.</u></p> <p><u>ACTION: EDI item to be on agenda for next meeting.</u></p> <p>Post meeting note: Here is the link for “What Was She Wearing”. Lots of students were extras but Thomas Joel was a main character https://youtu.be/tr6UT6y8hol</p>	KW

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm

Next meetings: 27 April 2022, 22 June 2022