

Minutes – Begbrook Primary Academy Council

Date	24 June 2025	
Location:	Teams meeting	
Time:	5.00 pm	
Present:	Sarah Page (SP)	Academy Councillor (Chair)
	Sian Adams (SA)	Teacher Academy Councillor
	Dr Shaun Mudd (SMU)	Parent Academy Councillor
	Dr Pawel Capik (PC)	Sponsor Councillor
	Kate Richardson (KR)	CLF Director of Education
	Simon Metson (SM)	Parent Academy Councillor
Attendees:	Linda Corbidge (LC)	Academy Council Clerk
	Vicky Counsell (VC)	Principal
	Emily Mowlem (EM)	Associate Assistant Principal (<i>item 6</i>)
	Emma Skade (ES)	SENCO (<i>Item 9</i>)
Apologies:	Anne Harris (AH)	Sponsor Academy Councillor

Minutes

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions	
1.1	SP welcomed councillors to the meeting.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no verbal declarations of interest made for this meeting.	
3	Governance	
3.1	Membership	
3.1.1	<p>Current vacancies were discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x Sponsor Academy Councillors – VC is following up on two potential sponsor councillors. Support Staff Councillor - there had been no nominations received in the recent election. VC will ask staff directly in Term 1. <p><u>ACTION: VC to ask staff directly in the new academic year re support staff vacancy.</u></p> <p><u>ACTION: VC will follow up on the two potential sponsor academy councillors.</u></p>	VC VC
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting held 19 April 2025 were approved as a true copy.	
5	Matters Arising	
5.1	<p><i>SM to make link health and safety visit and send visit note to clerk for next meeting update.</i></p> <p><u>Action: SM will arrange visit with the Operations Manager as soon as possible.</u></p>	SM
5.2	<p><i>VC will investigate if extra funding/support for the Eco Committee could come from the parent community.</i></p> <p><u>ACTION: Taken forward.</u></p>	VC

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5.3	<p><i>VC will contact PC, AH who had volunteered to support with monitoring visits regarding SATs arrangements.</i></p> <p>VC thanked councillors for their support; two monitoring visits were made with no issues raised. VC also noted that although the local authority did not conduct a moderation visit this year, internal quality assurance of Year 6 writing has been robust. Termly moderation sessions were held with the Year 6 team and leadership. Lauren, covering for Deborah Allen, has significantly contributed to the process, drawing on her prior experience as an attainment lead.</p>	
5.4	<p><i>VC will contact the data team to correct the spreadsheet.</i></p> <p><i>VC will liaise with SA to run a report to investigate absence/late codes on Monday mornings.</i></p> <p>VC reported that Connor Marshall(CM) from the CLF Attendance Team had visited. While attendance has improved compared to the end of last academic year, further improvement is needed. As part of the Trust support with attendance, regular fortnightly meetings with Lauren, the Academy Attendance Lead, are in place to support strategic planning and culture development around attendance. CM will contact the data team to sort the correction.</p> <p>Detailed reports on late codes are now available, providing greater insight into patterns and frequency, particularly focusing on Monday mornings.</p>	
6	Pupil Voice	
6.1	<p>EM reported that to better showcase the work of the Pupil Voice groups, a termly Pupil Voice newsletter was launched, created collaboratively with House Captains. The newsletter includes updates from each group, house point statistics, and reflections from pupils, helping to make their contributions more visible across the school community. Pupils enjoyed writing the newsletter, which is distributed digitally to families and made available in print for accessibility. The newsletter has been well-received and will continue, with plans to give future House Captains more independence in its creation.</p>	
6.2	<p><i>Are there any plans next year following the suggestion at the last meeting to capture enthusiasm on pupil voice from KS1?</i></p> <p>There has definitely been consideration around this, with a focus on creating a whole-school approach to pupil voice. There are already Eco Monitors in every class from Year 1 to Year 6. While there's interest in involving KS1 more, especially in age-appropriate ways, there are concerns about including them in existing committees due to capacity and the need to maintain momentum and impact within those groups.</p>	
7	Staffing/Wellbeing/Staff Voice	
7.1	<p>VC shared insights from recent staff wellbeing surveys, which included both Begbrook-specific and Trust-wide responses. The January Begbrook survey highlighted a key request from Teaching Assistants (TAs) for more training in managing challenging behaviours. In response, The NEST (the Trust's primary alternative provision offer) delivered targeted training sessions and 1:1 coaching support.</p> <p>The Trust-wide survey had a 73% response rate, which included staff on long-term sick leave or maternity leave. At Begbrook, time was allocated during working hours for all staff groups to complete the survey. This was the first Trust-wide survey in two years. Due to previously high staff turnover direct comparisons with past results are limited and current results will serve as a new baseline. A total of 47 Begbrook staff members completed the survey.</p>	

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7.2	<p>What is the general recruitment journey, training, expectation setting, and communication process for colleagues? How is it communicated that the TA role is not a role where you will be in the same place at the same time every day?</p> <p>There has been a shift in the role of TAs due to changes in funding and educational needs. With increasing funding challenges—particularly in Bristol, schools can no longer sustain this model. Colleagues are now adapting to a more flexible model where all staff support children with SEN, rather than being assigned to one child. Clear communication and expectation setting are essential, as the nature of the role has fundamentally changed.</p>	
7.3	<p>What support is available to help teachers to balance pupil-facing responsibilities with other tasks?</p> <p>We will address workload in the personal development meetings in Term 6 and support teachers to think about how they are utilising their day.</p>	
7.4	<p>Are TA colleagues able to work within current job descriptions?</p> <p>Our TAs are very familiar with the job description following work completed with HR.</p>	
7.5	<p>Workload will always come up - differences in expectations—especially for newly qualified teachers or those new to the CLF—may stem from cultural differences between organisations.</p> <p>While the Trust provides a shared curriculum, each academy has autonomy in how it is delivered. At Begbrook, the focus remains on continuous improvement and ensuring pupils leave Year 6 well-prepared and resilient.</p>	
7.6	<p>Do you have any reflections on staff perceptions of leadership and supervision which received lower scores in the survey?</p> <p>Begbrook’s size requires layered leadership structures, meaning not all staff can check in with the Principal daily. Some less experienced staff may prefer more frequent support, and there is a need to ensure clear communication about available support channels. <i>PC suggested scheduling periodic check-ins with senior leaders to share strategic updates, which could be built into the calendar.</i></p>	
7.7	<p>Having to be consistent was challenged by some in the survey – doesn’t consistency in systems reduces workload?</p> <p>Consistent routines benefit pupils by reducing behavioural issues and cognitive load, which should in turn reduce teacher workload.</p> <p>Discussion followed that staff may feel they lack autonomy. SM emphasised the importance of communicating where staff can use their creativity and professional judgement.</p>	
7.8	<p>What is the impact of staff absence cover on leadership workload?</p> <p>While short-term cover is usually managed by SLT, longer absences require external support, which can add pressure to leadership and affect staff perceptions.</p>	
8	<p>Academy Council Report</p>	
	<p>Quality of Education/Achievements and Standards</p>	
	<p><i>The Academy Council Report had been shared and was noted.</i></p>	
8.1	<p>Attendance</p>	
8.1.1	<p>VC reported that year-to-date attendance is slightly higher than at the same point last year. It was noted that Eid had a significant impact, with approximately 40% of pupils absent during the celebration. The Trust is providing ongoing support for attendance improvement for all schools across the Trust, with Connor Marshall (CM) visiting</p>	

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	<p>Begbrook every two weeks. Lauren is becoming familiar with school processes and building relationships with families. VC noted that further work is needed to improve attendance outcomes.</p> <p>Councillors noted that they had discussed attendance with KR during their pre-meeting. They recognised the ongoing focus on improving attendance at Begbrook and acknowledged the interventions currently in place, supported by CLF. Councillors suggested revisiting this topic in September to review progress and understand future plans. It was noted that the formatting error remained but would be rectified in the upcoming meeting with CM.</p> <p>ACTION: Review attendance progress and actions going forward in September</p>	All
8.2	Quality of Teaching	
8.2.1	SA highlighted a focus on planning for SEND, collaboratively with teachers.	
9	Disadvantage (incl. Pupil Premium, Children in Care)	
9.1	<p>ES provided an update on Children in Care (CiC), reporting that the Children in Care Policy is currently under review. ES highlighted areas from the annual CiC Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are three Children in Care (CiC) currently on roll. • Rewards and sanctions are applied in line with peers. • Attendance is not a concern; none are persistently absent. • There have been no exclusions recorded for any CiC. • PEP (Personal Education Plan) meetings are held three times a year, attended by a Hope Virtual School advocate. All PEPs since ES joined have been graded as Good and PEP paperwork is regularly monitored. Funding requests made at each PEP meeting are focused on academic and emotional support and Hope advocate approval is required for funding. Examples of funded support are daily reading sessions; play therapy, 1:1 maths intervention; Emotional Literacy Intervention; academic interventions for newly joined pupils. • CiC have free access to out-of-school clubs, Bristol Sport, and school event tickets. • There is positive engagement with social workers and foster carers. • Whole staff are trained on ACEs, attachment, and emotional coaching. Regular staff check-ins take place and updates are shared. The Designated Teacher (ES) has completed training on Designated Teacher responsibilities and also Kinship Care. • Local authority recommendations are being followed and implemented. 	
9.2	<p>What is the process for funding requests at PEP meetings?</p> <p>There is a set limit of £650 that can be requested at each PEP meeting. While the Hope Virtual School may reduce the amount if they feel the proposed use is not effective, all funding requests made have been approved to date, indicating that the funding has been well-justified and appropriately targeted to support the needs of the children.</p>	
10	Safeguarding	
	<i>The Term 5 Academy Safeguarding Report had been shared.</i>	
10.1	<p>SA highlighted that safeguarding remains a strength at the academy, with strong systems in place that are now being further embedded. The curriculum is responsive, and professional development (PD) around safeguarding continues to be a focus.</p> <p>A rise in child-on-child incidents was noted as a concern. While these incidents are not resulting in serious harm, they highlight the need for children to develop better strategies for managing frustration. The academy has implemented a detailed child-on-child incident log, regular check-ins, reflection forms, and increased staff presence during</p>	

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	unstructured times. The school is working proactively to address these issues, with a focus on prevention and listening to the voice of the child.	
10.2	Councillors discussed concerns regarding the rise in child-on-child incidents, noting the increase and also improved recording practices. Questions were raised about appropriate reporting levels and the availability of comparative data from other Trust schools. It was acknowledged that some behaviours may be linked to wider issues such as trauma, COVID-19, and screen time. Understanding trends across year groups and schools was suggested. Councillors agreed that safeguarding systems at Begbrook remain strong. <u>ACTION: SA to review and analyse data trends on child-on-child incidents across year groups.</u>	SA
10.3	VC provided an update on staffing. A full complement of teachers is expected by the end of term, with all other staff vacancies now filled. The school is expected to be running at full capacity by the end of July.	
11	SEND	
11.1	Report on SEND link visit taken forward to next meeting. <u>ACTION: AH to report on SEND link visit at next meeting.</u>	AH
12	Finance, Health & Safety and Estates	
12.1	Health and Safety	
12.1.1	SM will arrange to meet the school's health and safety lead. <u>ACTION: SM to meet with school health and safety lead and complete visit report for sharing with councillors.</u>	SM
13	Risk Register	
13.1	The Risk Register had been shared. It was noted that SP meets with VC to look at the Risk Register. There were no further comments.	
14	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	
14.1	Taken forward to Meeting 1 in 2025-26.	
15	Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC	
15.1	None.	
15	School Dates and Events	
15.1	School dates and events had been shared and noted by academy councillors.	
	Any Other Business	
16.1	Discussion took place on meetings next year, with councillors agreeing to a combination of face to face and online meetings. Meeting dates for 2025-26 now confirmed (see below).	
16.2	On behalf of the academy council, SP thanked staff for all their hard work and achievements this year.	

The meeting closed at 7 pm.

**Wednesday 24th September 5.00pm - 6.30pm - Annual Strategic Briefing Meeting
(Further details to follow)**

BPA meetings	4.30pm pre meeting	5-7pm AC meeting
Term 1	Tuesday 30th September	At Begbrook (in person)
Term 2	Tuesday 2nd December	Online

Term 3	Tuesday 3rd February	Online
Term 4	Tuesday 24th March	Online
Term 6	Tuesday 30th June	At Begbrook (in person)