

Wallscourt Farm Academy Council Thursday 18 April 2024, 5.30pm Wallscourt Farm Academy

AC Members		Attended	Apologies
Michael Small (MS)	Sponsor 1 (Chair)	✓	
Haidong Li (HL)	Sponsor 2		✓
Linda Tanner (LT)	Sponsor 3	✓	
Kathryn Raftery (KR)	Sponsor 4	✓	
Colette Percival (CP)	Sponsor 5		✓
Charlotte Black (CB)	Principal	✓	
Susie Weaver (SW)	Executive Principal	✓	
Trevor Jones (TJ)	Local Authority Rep	✓	
Paul Allen (observer)	Parent Councillor (TBC)	✓	
Jo Hewitt (JH)	Teaching Staff Councillor	✓	
Vacancy	Support Staff Vacancy		
Ellen Hardy (EH)	Student Advocate		✓
Invited attendees			
Hannah McDonnell	Vice Principal	✓	
Wendy Hellin (WH)	Clerk	✓	

Number	Relates to	ACTION	Owner
29.06.23 02	7.5.1	MS will meet with the new SENCo and invite them to the next AC meeting. Update: 18.04.24 – This item will be carried forward.	MS
11.01.24 01	7.6.6	MS to put out a doodle poll for potential dates for an AC learning walk, once CB advises the date of the next ARV. Update 18.04.24: MS will email ACs with a date once PA is fully onboard.	MS
29.02.24 01	5.6.4	CB to bring the New Joiners Assessment Policy to the next AC meeting. This is on the agenda and can be closed .	CB
29.02.24 02	5.6.6	CB to bring pupil voice on oracy to the next AC meeting. This item will be discussed within the AC report item on the agenda and can be closed .	CB
29.02.24 03	6.5.7	CB to check with FL as to whether the number of leave of absence requests at WFA is average compared to those across the trust. This item will be discussed under Attendance and can be closed .	CB

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions and Previous minutes	
1.1	MS welcomed everyone and introduced Paul Allen who is observing this meeting and will be joining the AC as the new Parent Councillor. MS confirmed that LT's term of office has been extended for a further four- year term. Apologies are recorded above.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	No new declarations were made.	
3	Approval of Previous Minutes	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting of 29 February 2024 were approved.	

4	Matters Arising	
4.1	The action table has been updated.	
5	Academy Council Report	
5.1	Oracy – Pupil Voice	
5.1.1	CB shared the pupil voice responses to four questions around oracy. The results detailed responses from a sample of 6 learners (4 PP, 2 non-PP). The aim was to get a sense of how well the work around oracy and talk for writing had landed with the students. CB reported that the responses were broadly in line with what staff wanted them to say. An oracy development day is on the action plan for oracy later this term. ACTION: The oracy action plan will be shared at the next meeting.	CB
5.2	AIP	
5.2.1	CB advised that generally, good progress has been made to the actions on the AIP. One area of slight slippage is Partnership Working and this is due to other higher priority actions requiring focus at this time. However, the school is still seeking those engagements and has booked a range of learning events at UWE for different year groups. ACTION: CB will provide a summary of Partnership Working, including actions going on in the community at the next AC meeting. SW suggested that at the next immersion day, Academy Councillors could prompt a question to pupils around what they have been doing outside of school to support their learning.	CB
5.3	ARV	
5.3.1	There has been no ARV since the last AC meeting. The next takes place on 1 May 2024, with MS attending.	
5.4	Behaviour	
5.4.1	There have been suspensions or exclusions to report.	
5.4.2	CB advised that behaviour is being tracked more closely. The United Against Bullying (UAB) audit has been completed to determine what is happening. An action plan has been produced from that and there has been some progress already made. Incidents logged on CPOMs from term 1 – term 4 were 33, 76, 54 and 57. One of the reasons to commission the report was that a large majority of incidents were occurring during unstructured times and staff wanted to understand the reasons for this.	
5.4.3	Staff development work is taking place with the out of hours teams and with lunch time staff. In term 1 the provision available during lunchtime and fresh air breaks was adapted and in term 4 when there were enough lunchtime leaders, a Stay Inside club was introduced. Some teaching partners still go outside to help supervise, and the indoor clubs include drawing and games. Some children find being outside too stressful so will choose to be inside and this is working well. There are new rotas in place and clarity around who leads which sessions indoors, who assists outside, and who sets up for the next learning session.	
5.4.4	A buddy system has been introduced at lunch time with Year 5 children going to Oak garden to play with the reception children. They include some vulnerable Year 5 children, often on the behaviour list, and it is delightful to see them being kind and caring with the younger children.	
5.5	Questions from the Academy Council	
5.6	Would you expect the number of behaviour incidents to decrease when the weather improves?	
5.6.1	Not necessarily. A lot of the incidents at lunch time can occur due to sports games, so it can vary. We are not fully staffed at lunch times as yet, so that also has an impact.	
5.7	What would good look like, in terms of the number of incidents?	
5.7.1	I do not know the answer. However, what we do want is less variance and more stability in the numbers. We expect a slight increase in term 2; that is always a more challenging term, with the lead up to Christmas, so we expect a term 2 increase, but not as much as the increase seen from 33 to 76. The numbers can be misleading. As we carry out staff development and encourage staff to log incidents, we would naturally expect an increase. It is anticipated that term 1 is lower due to some unreported incidents, where we have had new staff in place. All incidents would have been dealt with, according to the policy, but might not have been logged.	
5.8	How do lunch time leaders log things on CPOMs?	

5.8.1	They are able to record it on a sheet, or they pass the information to a class teacher or member of SLT who will enter the incident in the words of the lunch time staff member. The incidents logged are those where the behaviour required more than a reminder of rights and responsibilities, such as an escalation to SLT or where the learning of others have been impacted.	
5.9	How many more lunch time leaders do you need?	
5.9.1	We need to recruit 2 more.	
5.10	End of Questions	
5.10.1	Governors discussed the challenges in recruiting lunch time leaders. LT suggested asking if anyone from UWE would be interested. CB confirmed that this had been explored previously but was not fruitful; it can be explored again. SW suggested CB also approach Trinity.	
5.11	Attendance	
5.11.1	Attendance data has been shared. CB invited questions from Academy Councillors.	
5.12	How does the number of leave of absence requests at WFA compared to other trust schools?	
5.12.1	Currently, it is not collected. We have spoken to Fiona Lightwood (Attendance Lead for the trust) and reached out to Principals; however, the general feeling is that nobody routinely tracks this data. This will now be explored centrally, going forwards. We have recently carried out an attendance self-audit. (SW) There is an attendance review tool being trialled across secondary provisions. We will share the findings when complete.	
5.13	Do you approve any leave requests?	
5.13.1	Yes, but not often. It will depend on the circumstances.	
5.14	If you refuse to approve a leave request, do the family still take the leave?	
5.14.1	Often they do. Sometimes they may reduce the absence by a day or two. It is then recorded as unauthorised absence.	
5.15	How is the Attendance Hub going?	
5.15.1	We are approaching the end of the first year of the hub, and we are still uncertain about next year. It has been positive. We have a further hub meeting coming up. At the last meeting there was more engagement from the other schools present. There were around 100 attendees at the last meeting.	
5.16	Pupil Voice	
5.16.1	CB shared some recently captured pupil voice.	
5.16.2	The Academy Council discussed recent pupil events including the Evening Bedtime Stories event. Some pupil voice was captured around that event from disadvantaged students. The Council discussed the challenges in engaging the hard-to-reach families and get them into the academy for events and workshops. It was suggested that some of the photographs of pupils enjoying the bedtime story event be shared in the newsletter to encourage more families to attend next time.	
5.17	Assessment	
5.17.1	CB provided Year 6 mock assessment data for reading, maths and SPAG from terms 1 to 4, including the national average figure for last year, and the CLF average. The data shared for term 5 are the actual SATs results from last year. The combined figure is 67% and the PP gap is small. The Year 6 team are relentless and have not missed a single second of teaching opportunity during each day. Children have bought into this; they are seeing progress in themselves and feeling pride about this. There is still joy in the teaching and learning but it is specific and targeted learning.	
5.17.2	Reading data shows Year 3 PP pupils at 92%, which is excellent. The picture in EYFS and Year 1 has previously been discussed with the AC. Year 5 also has its own story, and there has been some mobility in that year group.	
5.17.3	Data for writing is lower, but there is a lot to celebrate, with some successes across all year groups and some greater depth for learners in years 4 ,5 and 6.	
5.17.4	There is some strong data in maths, particularly for PP learners and in years 1 and 2.	
5.18	Questions from the Academy Council	
5.19	71% for SPAG for EAL is great. Do you need anything further for that group to secure further improvements?	

5.19.1	We have had a push on writing this year, particularly for writing in depth. All of SLT are supporting this strand this term so that there is an additional adult in place whilst compiling the writing portfolio for moderation purposes. They have everything they need and are working hard to secure improvements. (SW) For context, the data for writing is from term 2, and includes the trust wide position at that point. The average combined figure is 57% and for WFA it is 74%. The PP trust average is 42%, with WFA at 67% at term 2.	
5.20	Data shows boys outperforming girls – is there anything particular about the cohort that is causing this?	
5.20.1	No, nothing stands out and the groups are about equal. We will include a group of boys in Year 6 when we carry out surveying at the end of Year 6.	
5.21	Is it a strong year group that has made additional progress during Year 6?	
5.21.1	No, we have considered that and looked at the cohort over time. Whilst there has been a lot of hard work over the last 2 years in particular, we would not have been able to achieve the percentages shown here without strong provision over time, right through from Reception.	
5.22	Are teacher’s judgements cautious?	
5.22.1	The Year 6 team gather a wealth of evidence for the pupils and this gives them confidence in their judgements. If there is any caution it will be around greater depth.	
5.23	Finance	
5.24	Questions from the Academy Council	
5.25	What is the budget looking like for next year?	
5.25.1	We are on target to meet business regulations this year. We are in the process of looking at the budget for next year and have been trying to identify some savings to ensure we again meet business rules. The budget will be tight. This is due to some maternity cover required, unconfirmed pay awards and rising energy costs. It is nationally recognised that primary budgets are challenging. ACTION: The budget for 2024/25 will be discussed in more detail at the next AC meeting.	MS CB
5.26	What are the expected pupil numbers for September?	
5.26.1	Fifty places have been offered and there are a potential further two pupils; we will continue to encourage further admissions, including in-year admissions. The lower pupil numbers will impact on the budget.	
6	Safeguarding	
6.1	CB reported that the annual safeguarding audit had been completed; this was the second in its current format. The audit is very broad and includes 187 questions. It is an extremely thorough process led by Steve Bane (trust DSL). Following the audit a RAG rated action plan is completed. The school received an email from Steve Bane saying it was great to see how the school had used last year’s audit to create an action plan and noted the strong safeguarding improvements made and the evidence of strategic thinking. The current audit score is just over 84%, an increase of 28% on the last audit, and a high score compared to those across the trust. CB advised that this work had been led by HM who had worked tirelessly to complete the actions on the plan. CB also noted that the audit did not mean that safeguarding was not robust, just that processes were not always written down, or that further evidence was required.	
6.2	Questions from the Academy Council	
6.3	It is worrying to see online issues increasing. Is there a particular reason for this?	
6.3.1	No, it is not just WFA, it is a nationwide issue. We find that some families do not understand, for instance, that a filter on the internet router would not filter WhatsApp. We are discussing further ways to engage families with online safety training, tips and information. One suggestion has been to produce a video to play to families that attend academy gatherings, in order that we capitalise on having a captive audience. This could be a video produced centrally in the trust and shared across all primary academies.	
6.4	Where you find there is an issue, are you able to ensure you get information to the children that have been affected?	
6.4.1	Yes, we are able to hold assemblies and provide information in class. It is harder to reach some of the parents, and it is not particularly linked to any demographic. Some parents are not particularly technically minded and can be naive to the risks and the controls available to them.	

6.5	End of Questions	
6.6	Academy Councillors discussed possible ways to reach more families. ACTION: CB will further explore the possibility of making an online safety video and will set up a small working group to look at online safety further.	CB
7	EDI	
7.1	CB has shared the EDI statements with the AC.	
7.2	Questions from Academy Councils	
7.3	There are some actions around EDI on the AIP. How are they progressing?	
7.3.1	Some of the work we are doing with the trust's Inclusion Lead have paused as they are not in work at present. However, from a SEN inclusion perspective there is a lot happening in school. HM and EH pulled together some reminders and refreshers for the last inset day. We are keen to ensure teachers and teaching teams have time to implement things. In terms of the reading development work, Jo has joined the reading team as Reading Lead, working alongside the English Lead and Phonics Lead. Jo is in school five days a week and will have the capacity needed to best progress actions in this area. Jo led CPD last term around whole class reading and this has been very positive. We carried out a mid-point review at the end of last term to see how the reading plan was being enacted and it shows some consistency in whole class reading in KS2.	
7.4	What is whole class reading?	
7.4.1	It is a mixture of things. It can be the whole class reading a text, linked to an enquiry. We teach the children the vocabulary first and then they have time to read the text independently before reading as a whole class. It could be that the teacher reads the book, or they read in pairs or small groups. They then have an activity to do based on the reading learning focus, such as making predictions about what happens in the story. The next ARV will include a reading deep dive and Academy Councillors can look at this during the learning walk.	
8	Staffing and wellbeing	
8.1	CB shared the results of the staff voice surveys from term 1 and term 3.	
8.2	Questions from the Academy Council	
8.3	One of the responses raises a specific concern. How are you responding to that given it is an anonymous survey?	
8.3.1	We will ensure everyone is aware that there is an open-door policy for any member of SLT to receive feedback from staff, should they wish to discuss anything.	
8.4	The completion rate is low. How will you encourage a higher return for the next survey?	
8.4.1	The next survey will be specifically for out of hours staff and we will ensure there is some time to complete it.	
9	Policies	
9.1	New Joiners Policy	
9.1.1	CB advised that the New Joiners Policy was introduced to the staff team this week. There has been one new starter since then and so it was a good opportunity to put the policy in practice. Key aspects of the in-year starter process have been streamlined to ensure a consistent approach. There is now a Tuesday morning tour for any new learner. They then join the school for a short visit the following Thursday morning to meet their class teacher and classmates and they then start in school the following Monday. This allows the team to complete any actions needed, such as sorting books and pegs and seeking information from the previous school. It also allows a much-valued home visit to take place, as it does for Reception children. The next step is to review what assessment looks like for all learners, but particularly for those with EAL.	
9.2	Questions from the Academy Council	
9.3	How was the policy received by staff?	
9.3.1	It was received well. It sets out a clear process and ensures that a sense of belonging is felt by children joining mid-year. It is good for the whole team. Data shows that learners that join in-year do not achieve as well as learners that have been in school since Reception and this policy will ensure they have a strong a start as possible.	
9.4	How many in-year joiners do you have on average?	

9.4.1	There are a fair number, we have had 4 in Year 4 since September and that is probably reflective of all year groups across the school.	
9.4.2	<p>The AC approved the following further policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Safety Policy • Remote Learning Policy • Supporting Pupils with medical conditions policy – this has been updated to detail that academies can now hold a pot of Calpol that can be administered with parental permission. • SEND policy <p>The EDI statement was also approved.</p>	
10	AOB	
10.1	<p>No further business was reported. The meeting closed at 19.40</p> <p>Future meeting dates (all at 5.30pm at the academy):</p> <p>Thursday 27 June 2024</p>	

Matters Arising

Number	Relates to	ACTION	Owner
29.06.23 02	7.5.1	MS will meet with the new SENCo and invite them to the next AC meeting. Update: 18.04.24 – This item will be carried forward.	MS
11.01.24 01	7.6.6	MS to put out a doodle poll for potential dates for an AC learning walk, once CB advises the date of the next ARV. Update 18.04.24: MS will email ACs with a date once PA is fully onboard.	MS
18.04.24 01	5.1.1	The oracy action plan will be shared at the next meeting.	CB
18.04.24 02	5.2.1	CB will provide a summary of Partnership Working, including actions going on in the community at the next AC meeting.	CB
18.04.24 03	5.25.1	The budget for 2024/25 will be discussed in more detail at the next AC meeting.	CB
18.04.24 04	6.6	CB will further explore the possibility of making an online safety video and will set up a small working group to look at online safety further.	CB