

Minutes – Hanham Woods Academy Council

Version: Approved
Meeting Date: Tuesday 27 February 2024
Location: HWA
Time: 5.30pm

AC Members		Attended	Apologies
Jon Gould	Sponsor 1 (Chair)	√	
Kevin Hawthorne	Sponsor 2	√	
Amanda Dale	Sponsor 3	√	
Rodrigo Munoz	Sponsor 4	√	
Patrick Cottam (observer)	Sponsor 5	√	
VACANCY	Student Advocate		
Stephen O'Callaghan	Principal	√	
Azeem Haroon	Parent Councillor	√	
John Bowman	Parent Councillor	√	
Nick Tucker	Teaching Staff Councillor	√	
VACANCY	Support Staff Councillor		
Jon Jones	Executive Principal		√
Lisa West	Local Authority Rep	√	
In Attendance			
Wendy Hellin	Clerk	√	

Date and No	Action	Owner
03.10.23 01	SOC and JG to follow up on Councillor recruitment. This item will be discussed under Governance and can be closed .	SOC JG
03.10.23 02	SOC to share the final Teaching and Learning policy with the Academy Council. This has been uploaded and will be approved at the next meeting. This is complete and can be closed .	SOC
12.12.23 01	The Link Councillor roles will be reviewed in January. WH will confirm by email the seven required Link Councillor roles. This item is complete and can be closed .	WH
12.12.23 02	The new SENCo will be invited to talk to the Academy Council about SEND priorities at the next meeting. This item will be carried over to the next meeting, when the new SENCo has been in role longer. Ongoing	SOC
12.12.23 03	SOC will share the Y11 presentation to Teams. This item is complete and can be closed .	SOC

Item	Description	Action
1	Introductions, Administration, Apologies	
1.1	JG welcomed Academy Councillors and introductions were made. Apologies are recorded above. The Academy Council welcomed Rodrigo Munoz and Amanda Dale to their first meeting.	
2	Declaration of Interest	
2.1	No verbal declarations were made.	
3	Academy Council Membership	

3.1	Vacancies were discussed. There has been a lot of successful recruitment recently. There remains a vacancy for a Student Advocate. NT agreed to collect some student voice until a Student Advocate is in place. ACTION: SOC will start the process to recruit a student advocate. SOC will contact the potential new Councillor.	SOC
3.2	Link Councillor roles were confirmed as: PP and LAC - (academy lead Rebecca Gardener) Jon Bowman Safeguarding - (academy lead Rebecca Tushingham) Lisa West Careers - (academy lead Sade Mujkic) Amanda Dale RHSE (academy lead Krisha Hendra) Patrick Cottam Teaching and Learning (academy lead James Littlejohns) Azeem Haroon SEND (academy lead Nic Hathway) Rodrigo Munoz H & S (academy lead Linda Hall) Jon Gould Attendance (academy lead Jane Thurston) Kevin Hawthorne	
3.3	The expectation is that between meetings the Link Councillor will arrange a conversation with the lead in the academy either in person or via Teams. A report is then written by the Link Councillor and added to the Teams folder.	
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting of 12 December 2023 were confirmed as a true record.	
5	Matters Arising	
5.1	The action table above has been updated. No further matters were raised.	
6	Academy Council Report	
6.1	SOC noted the Academy Council report had been circulated in advance and invited questions from Academy Councillors.	
6.2	Questions from Academy Councillors (response from SOC unless otherwise stated)	
6.3	Are you able to meet the needs of all students in the Resource Base?	
6.3.1	We meet the specifications of EHCPs where students have those. SEND provision in South Gloucestershire is challenging due to limited funding. Our new SENCo (NH) is looking at SEND with a classroom lens and the focus is to get students out of the Resource Base, where appropriate, and into lessons. This will help develop their independence. We need to make improvements to the in-class provision to ensure teachers are meeting need. This is in part due to staff not having time to plan appropriately. In terms of suspensions, SEND K students are disproportionately represented in the data and some of that will be due to not meeting their needs.	
6.4	The AC report mentions the rise in supply teachers used. Is there still an issue with the number of supply staff available?	
6.4.1	Generally, most of our staff go above and beyond. There is a strong culture of staff wanting to be in school to do the very best for their students. However, staff do get ill, and there has been an increase in staff absences. Supply remains a big issue; partly because there are not enough supply teachers available but also that it is hard to find good quality supply. The academy has seen a bit of a downturn in behaviour and some of that is rooted in poor quality supply teachers that are not following the academy processes. This erodes culture very quickly. We have had to let staff know that we cannot approve any planned absence (other than for significant life events). Trips may have to stop for a period of time. CPD days not yet booked will need to be cancelled. This is because there is a financial cost to having supply, but also a time cost for members of SLT who have to provide support in lessons, or to cover lessons. It is an expensive use of resource and detracts from making progress to the strategic goals of the academy.	
6.5	How many teachers are there across the school?	
6.5.1	There are around 60 teachers and about 40% of those are part time.	

6.6	Do you have a feel for what is driving the supply need – is it purely illness or do you have some vacancies?	
6.6.1	It is a mix. There are a couple of long-term supply staff in to cover vacancies. We have struggled a bit where they have not been strong teachers. The lack of supply teachers stems from the pandemic; many supply staff would not have been paid so would have had to seek other employment and it seems they have not returned to supply. It is a national problem and there is no immediate solution.	
6.7	Are you working towards a different solution for next year?	
6.7.1	Yes, we are aiming overstaff the timetable a bit more, so that Cover Supervisors do not have timetabled lessons and are freed up for cover. The timetable at HWA is particularly difficult to resource and we have had to use Cover Supervisors in the past, to pick up regular lessons. The funding per pupil has risen a little and we are looking to be full, in terms of pupil numbers, for next year, so that will also help.	
6.8	Is there any scope to call on the resources from the CLF as a whole? Are you able to borrow Cover Supervisors from other academies, for example?	
6.8.1	No, Cover Supervisors are a rare commodity and not one another school would wish to lend out. Recruitment is difficult across the trust and most academies have some form of long-term supply in their timetable, so it is difficult to release people to support elsewhere. We can look at things such as Teach First and within the trust there are good conversations and sharing of information where an academy has completed a recruitment process and there is a strong candidate that did not get appointed.	
6.9	There are some differences in attendance data between year groups, with Years 10 and 11 having the lowest attendance. What is the one thing that you would benefit from in order to see improvements in the data?	
6.9.1	We would benefit from further resource, in an ideal world. With the time and energy we are putting into attendance, we are just about holding it steady. It is not improving but is not falling off. Currently daily attendance is around 90%, whereas for some academies it is nearer 82/83%. We do not use quick fix strategies such as rewards of chocolate or certificates. The thing that improves attendance is a good culture in the academy with students feeling like they belong. The academy is generally calm and safe, and we continue to work on that strand of behaviour and belonging. As well as the lasting effect of the pandemic, the quite recent industrial action has also impacted on attendance. (KH) For some students, we focus on what is right for them, and their education journey. It might be easy to get a student to come in before the register closes (which would increase attendance) but that might not be right for the child; it might be they need to come in mid-morning, for example.	
6.10	Are you aware of any more strikes planned?	
6.10.1	The NEU are doing some preliminary ballots, due to the continuing discussion around teacher pay. This may result in a ballot for further strikes and we might see communications on this in March. There is the possibility of further strike days. We had a large number of teachers in during the last strike, but union members do not need to inform the Principal of their intention. I do ask and a large number do let me know, but it can vary on the day. For that reason, on most of the strike days previously, we have not had anyone other than vulnerable children in school.	
6.11	One of the unions, NASUWT possibly, have had a work to rule in place since September. Has this had an impact in school?	
6.11.1	No. We have good relationships with our union representatives; I meet with them a few times in each term, and they provide me with feedback on issues. Everything we do in school is within directed time and we have a bit of a buffer with a few hours of time as yet undirected.	

6.12	The AC report details that homework detentions are less well attended. Is the escalation in the policy always followed?	
6.12.1	It is, but it can be inconsistent. The system is still evolving as we learn. It appears some students would rather take the escalation, which is to come in the next day, rather than missing their break to attend detention. If something is not having impact, we review it and look to make changes.	
7	EDI at HWA	
7.1	SOC reported that Saima Akhtar (SA) the trust's Inclusion and Diversity Co-ordinator, was unable to join the meeting as planned. SA will be invited to attend to deliver some training at a future Academy Council meeting.	
7.2	<p>KH provided an overview of HWA's EDI journey, highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA has been working with trust schools, including HWA on their EDI journey and describes four stages of Indifferent, Anxious, Eager and Confident. • HWA has completed a self-audit and would put itself somewhere between Indifferent, Anxious and Eager. • The work with SA came about due to some of the student voice work the academy had been doing; HWA is doing the South Gloucester Quality Mark to improve practice and Josiah Chudleigh from the LA is leading that work. Student voice that came out of that initial work was quite stark, particularly from students with protected characteristics. There is some serious work to do, and this has started. • The academy is in a different place to that of 4 or 5 years ago. A student in Year 7 experiencing something a few years ago might have been responded to with a conversation but no sanction or follow up; that experience will live with them through their school journey, so now as a Year 11 student, they will have a lot of baggage and negative experiences. For some students, the negative experience of EDI may have started as early as primary school. • There is also a big influence in terms of social media. • The focus on EDI is seen right across the CLF and is an organisational shift. • A parent/carer forum was held, and their voice also talked about being anxious. A lot of the comments made in that space had an impact on staff positively and negatively and was quite harmful for some colleagues. • The journey is described as a journey of hope, not hate, with a theme of belonging. • A code of conduct has been developed with staff so that there is a safe space to work in during this journey. • The staff body at HWA is not diverse; some staff hold the burden more than others. • Key actions include working on the Anti-Racism award, the Equality mark and the Anti-Hate Ambassador training. Three members of staff will be trained and in turn will train up students; the first wave will be 20 students this year, with a further wave next year. • The school are also working with Building Community Cohesion who work across businesses in the area. • The EDI statement is being relaunched and a Culture Day is taking place on 13 March, to which Academy Councillors are invited. • Prejudicial racist data – there has been an increase in racial incidents, but this is in part due to improved recording. • Following the pupil survey, the school changed the safeguarding assembly to talk to each year group about incidents and the action taken by school. The incidents that happen inform the PHSE curriculum. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KH has completed some training with Citizens UK around real listening, and this will now be rolled out to families, staff and students. • A Big Citizens assembly will take place on 18 April, and it is hoped some of the HWA students can attend; there will be a focus on how to develop as a relational school, something that a lot of nurturing, special schools do. 	
7.3	Questions from the Academy Council	
7.4	Have you thought of having staff ambassadors, as well as students?	
7.4.1	Yes, we have 3 trained. SA will complete some follow up training with staff with protected characteristics.	
7.5	Action: SA will be invited to the AC meeting on 23 April 2024.	SOC
8	Academy update	
8.1	<p>SOC reminded Academy Councillors of the academy's mission and values, and provided the following updates on things that have been happening in the academy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS3 Assessments • Year 11 PPEs • Parent/Carer Forum • Inter-house competitions • Sporting fixtures • Trips and visits • Special guest visit from Sir Kier Starmer and Damien Egan (who attended HWA) • Year 9 options • Holocaust Memorial Day • Recruitment update – staffing for next academic year is now being considered alongside setting the budget for next year. 	
8.2	Attendance	
8.2.1	SOC reported that attendance remains a challenge. The data is holding but is not improving. PA is at 27.5%. Whole school attendance is at 90.4% with the national data at 91.3%. Data for individual groups, including by ethnicity, is included in the AC report. There are some groups with attendance data above the national average, however, some groups are very small.	
8.3	Suspensions	
8.3.1	Suspension data was shared with the Academy Council. During the current academic year, 4.9% of students have had a suspension. SOC advised that the academy has tried to actively reduce the time students spend on a suspension, and try to keep it to half a day or a day where appropriate, with extended suspension time used only when essential.	
8.4	Questions from Academy Councillors	
8.5	Is there a reason for the increase in suspensions? From term 5 onwards, they reach the 100 mark.	
8.5.1	Some of it will be because we have been raising standards and expectations. Across terms 5 and 6 last year we were updating the uniform policy and being firm around that and it did result in more defiance and an increase in suspensions.	
8.6	Is it a relatively small number of students that are regularly excluded?	
8.6.1	Yes. It is relatively small compared to the number of students in the cohort, but it takes up a lot of time and resource. It is not uncommon for the senior team to be pulled out of things to support staff with behaviour incidents. Lengthy suspensions are not the solution; they do not have the desired impact on the student in question, but to have an impact on the other students in the academy. Within the suspension data, students with SEND are overrepresented, as are PP students. The academy is not yet meeting all needs well enough and will be in the AIP for next year.	

8.7	What is the population of SEND students?	
8.7.1	There are approximately 150 students that are SEND K and SEND E. There are around 30 students with an EHCP. This is higher than many schools due to the Resource Base. Most of the SENCo time is therefore spent with the EHCP students or working on the processes for EHCPs, such as annual reviews. There are many students that are thriving and are positive about their experience in school. There are a whole range of other students that do not get to the stage of having a diagnosis; that takes an extremely long time. For that reason, we put provision in place when we recognise a need, even if undiagnosed. We can make the most gains through quality first teaching in the classroom.	
8.8	ACTION: SOC to share the newsletter with the AC at the end of each term.	SOC
9	Safeguarding	
9.1	LW advised that she is meeting the DSL, RT on Thursday.	
10	Finance, Health and Safety, Estates	
10.1	Health and Safety Committee	
10.1.1	JG reported that a Health and Safety Committee meeting took place last week. One of the discussion points was that some of the items on the list of maintenance and repairs that the estates team were working on have not yet been completed. The committee have asked the Senior Operations Manager to follow up on that.	
10.2	Risk Register	
10.2.1	SOC described some of the things included on the risk register. This includes Health and Safety issues but also wider areas such as strategic and education risks, the risk of reputational damage to the school, the current canteen provision, recruitment, staff wellbeing and Ofsted readiness. ACTION: The risk register will be shared with the AC at the next meeting.	SOC
11	Staffing and Wellbeing	
11.1	Nothing further to report.	
12	Policies for approval	
12.1	JG asked Academy Councillors to lead on the review of the following policies: Admissions Policy – KH (for approval by 28 February 2024) Teaching and Learning policy – AH and RM Following feedback provided by JB, the Academy Council noted the CLF Exclusions and Suspensions Policy. The following policies, reviewed at the last meeting, were approved: Looked After Children Policy Young Carer Policy Early Career Teacher Policy RHSE Policy Anti-Bullying Policy	
13	Governance inc membership, training, feedback	
13.1	Governors were reminded to complete their Nimble training.	
14	Matters for the COAC/Board	
14.1	N/A	
15	AOB	
15.1	No other business was reported. The meeting closed at 7pm. Future meeting dates: 23 April 2024 – 5.30pm (LW agreed to Chair this meeting in JG's absence) 25 June 2024 – 5.30pm	

Actions to carry forward:

Date and No	Action	Owner
03.10.23 01	SOC and JG to follow up on Councillor recruitment. SOC will contact the potential Councillor. This item is ongoing .	SOC JG
12.12.23 02	The new SENCo will be invited to talk to the Academy Council about SEND priorities at the next meeting. This item will be carried over to the next meeting, when the new SENCo has been in role longer. Ongoing	SOC
27.02.24 01	SOC will start the process to recruit a student advocate. SOC will contact the potential new Councillor.	SOC
27.02.24 02	SA will be invited to the AC meeting on 23 April 2024.	SOC
27.02.24 03	SOC to share the newsletter with the AC at the end of each term.	SOC
27.02.24 04	The risk register will be shared with the AC at the next meeting.	SOC

Link Councillor roles:

PP and LAC - (academy lead Rebecca Gardener) Jon Bowman
 Safeguarding - (academy lead Rebecca Tushingam) Lisa West
 Careers - (academy lead Sade Mujkic) Amanda Dale
 RHSE (academy lead Krisha Hendra) Patrick Cottam
 Teaching and Learning (academy lead James Littlejohns) Azeem Haroon
 SEND (academy lead Nic Hathway) Rodrigo Munoz
 H & S (academy lead Linda Hall) Jon Gould
 Attendance (academy lead Jane Thurston) Kevin Hawthorne