

Minutes – Bristol Brunel Academy Council

Version: Approved
Date 6th March 2023
Location: Bristol Brunel Academy
Time: 5.30 pm

Attendees:

Nicky McAllister (Chair) - Sponsor Councillor
 Nicola Pearce – Sponsor Councillor
 Helen Pascoe – Sponsor Councillor
 Dan Nicholls – Executive Principal
 Jon Jones – Principal
 Naomi Soper – Teaching staff councillor
 Nicky Goodall – Parent Councillor
 Sydney Wesley-Weeks – Support Staff Councillor
 Emma Thorn – Sponsor Councillor

Invitees:

Jen Cusack – Vice Principal
 Jonny Mercer – LA Representative – Observer

Apologies:

Saima Akhtar– Sponsor Councillor
 Daisy Hodgson-Smith – Student Advocate
 Rahana Davies – Parent Councillor

| Item | Description | Action |
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| 1 | Introductions | |
| 1.1 | NM welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies are recorded above. | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest | |
| 2.2 | No new declarations. | |
| 3 | Academy Council Membership | |
| 3.1 | The Academy Council is now full. | |
| 4 | Minutes of Previous Meeting | |
| 4.1 | The minutes of the meeting of 5 December 2022 were agreed as accurate. | |
| 5 | Matters Arising | |
| 5.1 | All councillors to consider joining the policies committee and email HP with their interest. This action is ongoing. | |
| 5.2 | JJ to provide data on the subgroups of bullying in the next AC report to identify trends in the types of bullying occurring. This action is complete and can be closed. | |
| 5.3 | JJ to bring details of success criteria and measurements for academic mentoring to the next meeting. JJ reported that the academic mentoring is bespoke to the individual; the data is coming out now and staff will then judge progress against the success of those individuals. The students are being mentored in small groups and there is a high degree | |

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| | of challenge for the students chosen for that group. It will be very pleasing if there is impact as they are a challenging group to move on. Some have found it extremely difficult to come in to sit mocks; anxiety around exams is very high. 15 – 20 students have struggled in different ways. This action can be closed. | |
| 5.4 | Q: Is there any mechanism for special consideration for these students with anxiety? | |
| 5.4.1 | Yes, there is. There would need to be a letter from the GP to support that. There is a challenge in that the academy does not have enough small rooms available for everyone that needs them for exams, and it is challenging to recruit sufficient invigilators. | |
| 5.5 | Q: How do you recruit invigilation staff? | |
| 5.5.1 | Some are central to the trust, and some are employed directly; there are around 12 to 15. | |
| 5.6 | Q: Does that mean there is a cost implication for the reasonable adjustments? | |
| 5.6.1 | Yes, for exam access arrangements. | |
| 5.7 | Q: Do you also use staff for invigilation? | |
| 5.7.1 | Where we can, but there are strict guidelines about how much we can use staff and additional exam rules that mean an English teacher would not be able to invigilate the English exam, for example. | |
| 5.8 | JJ to share report on the number of students studying science post-16 from BBA. JJ reported 23 students went on to study science at Post 16. This action is complete and can be closed. | |
| 5.9 | JJ & JC to take the idea of a defender badge back to discuss with SLT. JJ reported that there are badges for students that are part of support groups, such as those for protected characteristics. This action can be closed. | |
| 5.10 | JC to ensure Year Teams are aware of the support available. This has been actioned and can be closed. | |
| 5.11 | NM to take discussion around mental health and wellbeing to the next COAC meeting. This has been actioned and can be closed. | |
| 6 | Art and Photography | |
| 6.1 | RTE gave a presentation on Art and Photography at BBA, highlighting the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are still being cautious with predictions; a lot can still change. • Most of the mocks have now been marked. • There is a group of students that have potential to increase a further grade; there is often a marked change in the maturity of students after Christmas and that can affect their attitude to their work. • Art is always one of the last mocks; some have struggled with that in terms of maintaining their focus and work ethic throughout all the mocks. • There is some concern around the Photography data at present. There are a number of reasons for this including low attendance and some poor behaviour. Year 10 started with a teacher on maternity leave and have then had a further 2 or 3 teachers since. There has now been stability there since September and it is hoped this will be reflected in the data soon. • There is coursework improvement to do in addition to exam preparation. Students are given a theme for the exam and have this term to prepare and will take the exam after Easter. • The exam component is worth 40% of marks; coursework is 60%. • Students can be confused about which component of work they are doing so we separate out the learning where we can and run catch up for all four classes on a Wednesday. • There are additional catch-up sessions for Photography students. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some very personalised plans in place for SEND students; the plan includes lots of short pieces of work for quick wins to keep their morale up and brings them additional marks. • Each class has a checklist that includes lesson content right up to the exam after Easter; this has been given to students and is on Show My Homework. • Before half term exam preparation was marked and staff pinpointed exactly what needed to be done next and this was sent home to parents so that everyone knew what was outstanding; • The checklist includes a breakdown of tasks that students need to complete; a physical example is given (often produced by teachers) for each task. Those physical examples have also been photographed and added to the checklist. • The art department is open most break and lunch times for students to catch up and get extra support. | |
| 6.2 | Q: What is the format of the Art exam? | |
| 6.2.1 | It is a ten-hour exam sat over the course of two days in the art room. Students take all their preparation in with them and produce a final piece. | |
| 6.3 | Q: You are doing huge amounts of catch-up. Do you find you are in competition with other subjects in terms of time, and getting students to attend? | |
| 6.3.1 | That has previously been the case, but it has been resolved now that we use a Wednesday when the rest of the academy are doing STS. There are no clashes and no excuses and has worked out well. | |
| 6.4 | Q: What is the take-up in the Arts and Photography courses? Does the option system enable those students that want to continue with art subjects at KS4 to do so, or are there conflicts there? | |
| 6.4.1 | On the whole they do get their options. In addition to Art and Photography there are two other creative subjects they can take. The challenge is that the DfE apply discount codes so students cannot do Art and Art Textiles, or Art Ceramics together as they discount each other so the school cannot claim 2 GCSEs. There are also some challenges with the focus on Ebacc, where if students take one humanities subject and one language, the creative options are limited. It can also be challenging for students in terms of the coursework load if they take two creative subjects like Art and D & T. | |
| 6.5 | Q: Are you getting the right students turning up to catch up sessions? | |
| 6.5.1 | Not necessarily. There are some students whose attendance is challenging, if they attended more, we could get them a grade. We do personalise everything. Each student does a very different project to the next. Setting up things like the checklist took a lot of time but saves time over time and is incredibly helpful. | |
| 6.6 | NM thanked RTE and she left the meeting. | |
| 7 | Sports | |
| 7.1 | <p>GO gave a presentation on Sport and Health and Social Care at BBA, highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 2 classes for Sport in Year 11. There has been some disruption due to staffing; there would not normally be an ECT with a Year 11 group, however, the other class has an experienced member of staff. • Overall PP students and SEND students are under achieving compared to non-PP cross both classes. • The department has been able to double staff the double lessons to ensure the experienced class teacher can support the ECT. • Data for the two groups combined was shared; they are shown as on track, negative or positive. The data capture does not fit into the assessment schedule exactly so staff are cautious with the data. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the data staff then identify the students (in purple) needing intervention, and three students (in blue) where a decision was made to remove them from the course due to the lack of progress across all their subjects to give them additional time to catch up in core subjects. Some of the interventions include after-school catch-up, which is an open invite for anyone to come along. Alongside this staff target specific students that do need to catch up and invite them along; where they do not attend, the year team have started collecting them from the end of tutor time and bringing them along to the session. This has been successful. There has also been whole-school intervention, particularly for PP and SEND students in the form of a small group of 3 or 4 students and feedback has been very positive. There was a February half-term catch up and another will take place over the Easter break. Attendance at these sessions has not been strong traditionally; 2 of the students that needed it most came in and made significant progress. Staff do phone home and try to encourage as many students in as possible. Some intervention is also done as part of core PE lessons. Students are taken out from the start of PE so they miss the set-up of the activity but re-join the lesson after 20 or 25 minutes where they will still benefit from the exercise at the highest point of the activity. That has been used for both Year 10 and Year 11. There are 3 Year 11 classes for Health and Social care this year (normally just 2). There has been some concern with one group due to challenges of staffing, but things have been moved around and it is hoped they will now make progress – they are now being taught by Jess Chapman. Predictions for Health and Social care exams were shared. There is after-school intervention on a Monday. These are planned to avoid clubs and sports fixtures to make sure students don't miss those. February half-term catch up ran, and again, this will run again over Easter; this has been mainly about completion of work, rather than of standards. More clubs are running this year, particularly recreational sports such as badminton and table tennis. Some of the attendance data is very good in relation to clubs, with high amounts of PP students attending. Some students do not attend clubs but do represent the academy in fixtures as a lot of them already have commitments to those sports outside of school. This year to date there has been 108 fixtures and there is quite a bit of success in there particularly in football. They represent the academy very well, both in the success of the sport and the way the students conduct themselves. | |
| 7.2 | <p>Q: Are there any SEND students that would benefit from extra tutor time to get the work done? Could they have some earlier intervention in Year 10?</p> | |
| 7.2.1 | <p>Our current year 10 have core intervention at present, as much as we can do in the school day to benefit them all. We are more constrained with time for coursework in Year 10 than in Year 11.</p> | |
| 7.3 | <p>Q: It has been mentioned that sometimes students drop option subjects to concentrate on the core. If they drop Sports Science, are they content to do so or is that a challenge?</p> | |
| 7.3.1 | <p>JJ is involved in each of those decisions; they are not taken alone. The students that are taken out of subjects are at the extreme end of things, such as having very low attendance. It is challenging in lots of ways; when out of the normal subject lesson, staff have to be available to be with those students. It is not a decision taken lightly.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>Academy Council Report</p> | |

| Item | Description | Action |
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| 8.1 | The Academy Council report was shared prior to the meeting in Teams. JJ invited questions from the Academy Council. | |
| 8.2 | NM noted that the CLF SEND report and the ARVs are so positive; it is very encouraging. The recommendations are very clear and ones the Link Councillors can engage with. | |
| 8.3 | Attendance | |
| 8.4 | Q: Do the attendance rewards have impact on those targets or is it the calls home, home visits and other processes that are having impact? | |
| 8.4.1 | It is difficult to measure which is having impact. We have had a refresh of our approach to attendance and have a new Attendance Officer in place. We continue to use some of the existing strategies too; and rewards are one of those that will continue. There is quite a bit of discussion across the trust about whether schools should be rewarding for attendance at all. | |
| 8.5 | Q: Although there have been improvements to attendance over the first 4 weeks of Term 3, they are still the lowest for some time. How is SEND attendance and if they are not attending, why is that? | |
| 8.5.1 | Attendance is not good enough and attendance for PP and SEND is not where it should be. Compared to national data, it is not far off, and we are fifth in terms of the trust data as well as being comparable to some non-trust neighbouring schools. We don't know the reason some SEND students in particular are not attending; it could be they feel their needs are not being met in the classroom or that they don't feel the sense of belonging. This has been a thread since Covid; many students find it harder to see school as a place they belong, and we will take away that challenge and keep it in focus. | |
| 8.5.2 | NM noted that it was in the recommendations from the ARV that the barriers to SEND students should be explored. ACTION: JJ | JJ |
| 8.6 | Sometimes the data can be skewed by SEND students that are school refusers. It would be helpful to have a more detailed breakdown in terms of that attendance data, to show the groups. | |
| 8.6.1 | ACTION: JJ will include a breakdown of groups for attendance data in the next AC Report. | JJ |
| 8.7 | Q: The attendance data shows an increase of 4.8% in Year 11 from term 1 to term 6; how many students does that 4.8% represent? | |
| 8.7.1 | It represents 12 more students absent. It is worth noting that some of these absences are not full absences; some will be lates where students have come in after the register has closed. These do skew the figures considerably. | |
| 8.8 | Q: How confident are you that you will be able to raise attendance, and what impact will that have? | |
| 8.8.1 | I am confident that the attendance team, with the trust-wide support in place which includes Fiona Lightwood and two days a week of EWO support from the LA, will be able to raise attendance. Over the last 2 weeks, we have signed over 20 penalty notices which demonstrates that this process is now robust, where it wasn't there before. These are the end result that follow the other well-established routines of home visits, purchasing alarm clocks, providing breakfast and so on. | |
| 8.9 | Q: How will the implementation of English be tracked and who is responsible for this? | |
| 8.9.1 | We are losing our Literacy Lead and we are recruiting for that position. Literacy is held by a team of three who work together to track and identify the students that need it. | |
| 8.10 | Q: Are the reading recommendations for those children that are reading below their current age range? | |
| 8.10.1 | Yes, these are students reading at a very early stage (some due to the pandemic) and the interventions are largely based around those students. The work that happens on mass, with all staff, including different models of phonics and different models of understanding key words, help all children across the board. There is a need, across the | |

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| | education landscape, for a greater focus on the understanding of phonics, particularly for secondary school staff. | |
| 8.11 | With regard to reading and reading for pleasure, are there systems in place to support that through all year groups, or does it stop at a certain age? | |
| 8.11.1 | It is a robust system that is in place in KS3. When students get to Year 10 and 11 tutors read to students in tutor time. Reading for pleasure is still encouraged but it is not tracked as it is in KS3, so there is a shift there. | |
| 8.12 | In January, during a visit, there was a board in JC's office looking at all the strategies put in place to support raising attainment in Year 11. We have heard today from two departments, and you have spoken about academic mentoring. Do we know the effectiveness of strategies such as intervention ladders, departmental meetings and plans etc? | |
| 8.12.1 | It is the bucket 3 subjects in particular, the vocational subjects, where we can see impact of where students have been supported to catch up with coursework and where individual intervention has enabled students to move from a pass to a distinction in a particular unit, for example. The intensive support of withdrawing students from one class to catch up with another is a difficult decision, but one that had to be made; it is a greater good decision. The next step is to get the Year 11 predictions and look at current data and look at specific students where intervention has happened. We have also re-set all English classes; it was a tough decision as it meant breaking that bond the students may already have with their current teacher; but it is the right thing to do. We should see some impact from those decisions in terms of outcomes. | |
| 8.13 | Can you summarise how you are supporting students to be successful, yet at the same time, to be accountable for their own work and decisions? | |
| 8.13.1 | Yes, there is a danger that when we support students who haven't completed work on time, we are taking away their accountability. That bit is our next challenge; we need to ensure they are on track and help them to take responsibility for that, so we are supporting them to be successful in the long term, both at Post 16 and beyond. The conflict is that if we take away the support, it will be the PP and SEND students that feel it the most. It is something we are considering carefully going forwards and of course the academy remains accountable for the results too. | |
| 8.14 | Reflect and Refine is looking to be well established now and is an impressive piece of work. It has been through a few cycles now. Is it here to stay? What has the staff reflection been of it? | |
| 8.14.1 | It has changed a bit. It was originally led by SLT and curriculum leaders, then SLT and DSLs and now SLT and UPS colleagues. We want to see how UPS are coping with the process and giving feedback to members of staff. We have not yet thought too much about how it will morph into the next phase. If it is going well, we have to ask why our results are as they are. It is certainly impactful in terms of staff development. Staff are given an actual step to take, and it is revisited later in the term to see if has been improved. In terms of students the atmosphere is different in class; it is more engaging and there is a higher work effort in most classes. The flip side is that grades need to improve. | |
| 8.15 | Q: EDI training has been completed. How have departments reflected on that and how can they continue to develop this? | |
| 8.15.1 | It is lovely to hear positive feedback on EDI. We have people from across the city that come to us, or to Fairfield, to see how EDI is done well; we are highly regarded. It is about how the everyday things, like race or gender, find their way into the curriculum planning. Going forward there are a number of places where we have particular plans in place, such as the Anti-Racist school award, representation in our curriculum, a clear strategy for recruitment of BaME colleagues. We are making sure that we maintain high accountability, not just from a compliance point of view, but to lead the way. We are | |

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| | also putting ourselves out there in terms of taking responsibility to lead in this area beyond the trust. | |
| 8.16 | It was a big decision to be involved in the Anti Racist School Award (ARSA) survey. Were there any surprises in the results? | |
| 8.16.1 | No, it is now more about how we develop it. There were not any surprises; we had a good grasp of where we were. The challenge is around how we take it forward. We are linking up with the Anti-Bullying and training our students to be ambassadors. We are about to send some things off for the accreditation and the deadline for that is the end of March. We have a fair idea of where we are and what we are going to get. | |
| 8.17 | Is there a plan to do that survey again at a later date? | |
| 8.17.1 | Yes. As we talk more about this area in particular, we are aware that we have the ability to talk to our students here that have already experienced some difficult things in life, including racism. It is quite shocking. The surveys are important and powerful, and they open a huge emotional response from our students, and we have to be alert to that and ready to support them. | |
| 8.18 | Q: The report details on page 14 the LAC children and it says there were 165 incidents for 21 children. Is that right? | |
| 8.18.1 | No, those are bullying events compared to those that are looked after children and compared to those not looked after. There were 121 incidents of child-on-child abuse, and 2 of those were for LAC. | |
| 8.19 | Q: There are some excellent resources that have been developed for Show Racism the Red Card. Can you tell us more about those and how they have been received by the students? | |
| 8.19.1 | We wore t-shirts, arm bands and badges and feedback was generally really positive. There were posters used in classrooms and it was a great opportunity to reinforce the message. All classes watched the same PowerPoint. | |
| 8.20 | Q: Do you have any challenges with students being the perpetrators of racism? | |
| 8.20.1 | Yes, and we deal with it when it happens. There are some families that use racist language and have extreme views. Those views are less on the surface within the academy as it is not tolerated by the other children; they will be challenged on it by their peers. Some of the language we hear is historical or antiquated language that they have heard elsewhere. It can sometimes be that it is used by a child with special needs and sometimes they have been told to say something by another student, and this can be challenging to deal with. Our next step is to support the parent to support the child to make the right choices with their language. | |
| 8.21 | The data for bullying is good to have, not because the incidents have happened, but because they have been reported. | |
| 8.22 | Q: The report has an amount of purple text in it. There are three categories – sometimes the purple thread is there because it might be considered as disadvantaged pupils, sometimes it is an issue affecting disadvantaged pupils and sometimes it is an action. How helpful is that in holding leaders to account? Will we see a lot of purple in there and be satisfied or should we be looking for something specific? Should purple text be reserved for actions linked to disadvantaged students? It's something the AC might want to consider. What do you think as Principal? | |
| 8.22.1 | This is a good challenge. At present if something is mentioned it gets a purple thread, but it does not necessarily mean something has been improved for disadvantaged students. It could be more tangible such as where the attendance team phone home for disadvantaged students first; but that might be a bit reductive. <u>ACTION: After discussion, it was agreed that anything that pertains to disadvantage pupils is purple, but actions are put in bold text.</u> | JJ |
| 9 | Safeguarding | |

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| 9.1 | HP reported that she has arranged a Link Academy Councillor visit for safeguarding for tomorrow. | |
| 10 | Finance, Health and Safety and Estates | |
| 10.1 | JJ reported that there will be 8 forms of entry next year, so it is important that the promised building works are complete. This will be additional play space at the front of the academy and two out-door changing rooms. This will see the academy at its largest in terms of pupil numbers at 1350. | |
| 11 | Staffing and Wellbeing | |
| 11.1 | JJ reported that Simon Jones has taken up the Vice Principal role at DSSB, so there will be some recruitment to do to fill that post. Recruitment remains a challenge; last year the number of people training to be a teacher halved and it is predicted to half again. | |
| 12 | Policies that require review | |
| 12.1 | NA | |
| 13 | Student Voice / Student Advocate | |
| 13.1 | Nothing further was reported. | |
| 14 | Governance | |
| 14.1 | The CLF training programme for Academy Councillors has been circulated by Charlotte Seavill. The conference is on Wednesday afternoon. | |
| 15 | Equality and Diversity | |
| 15.1 | This has already been covered in this meeting; nothing further was reported. | |
| 16 | Matters for the attention of the Board / COAC | |
| 16.1 | <u>NA</u> | |
| 17 | AOB | |
| 17.1 | No other business was reported. The meeting closed at 7.25pm. | |