



Bristol Brunel Academy

Bristol Brunel Academy Council Meeting Minutes Monday 8th February 2021, 5.30pm Venue – Microsoft Teams

Key Issues (OFSTED Inspection Oct 2017)

1. Progress made by the most able pupils continues to improve so that more of them achieve the highest grades
2. A greater proportion of pupils achieve a strong pass in both English and Mathematics.

Academy Council:

Nicky McAllister (NM) CHAIR	Sponsor 1	In Attendance	
Nicola Pearce (NP)	Sponsor 2	Vic Boynton (VB)	Vice Principal
Emma Thorn (ET) **	Sponsor 3	Abbigael Bainton (AB)	Asst Principal
Helen Pascoe (HP) VICE CHAIR	Sponsor 4	Jen Cusack (JC)	Asst Principal
Emma McAvoy (EM) *	Sponsor 5	Simon Jones (SJ)	Asst Principal
<i>Vacancy</i>	Teacher	Edward Thomas (ET)	Asst Principal
Sophie Elsbury (SE) Student Advocate	Support Staff &	Tara Paisey (TP)	AAP
Rahana Davis (RD) *	Parent	Andrew Buck (AB)	AAP
Nicky Goodall (NG) (Observer)	Parent		
Sally Apps (SA)	Executive Principal		
Jon Jones (JJ)	Principal		
Udonna Okeke (UO) (Observer) **	LA Rep		
Charlotte Seavill (CS)	Clerk		
Indicates Action			
Indicates question/challenge			
*	<- Indicates absent.		**indicates present for part of the meeting only

1, Introduction, Administration, and Apologies

AC Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made for new members. Apologies were received and accepted for: EM & RD
The meeting was deemed to be quorate.

2, Declaration of Interests

None

3, Approve minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes from the meeting (7th December 2020) were approved.

4, AC Membership

The council discussed the need to reassign link roles to include new members. **All councillors were asked to email their current link role (if any) to the clerk.**

5, Actions and Matters Arising

- The academy is tracking the attendance at remote lessons and the actual completion and submission of work and will provide an update at the next meeting. The council also asked for an update on extended writing at the next meeting – Complete
- The Council requested an update on workload for staff at the next meeting – action Principal. – Complete
- Councillors were reminded to complete their Nimble training by the end of term as this is now overdue. Complete
- The minutes from the meeting (5th October 2020) are to be approved via email to the Chair and Clerk by 10th December 2020 - Complete

Academy Council Report

The council received an update on the Academy's approach to online learning in the latest lockdown. The academy was able to shift much more easily into a lockdown leadership structure this time having learned from previous periods of lockdown. As a trust, the collective aim is to ensure that students are safe, fed and learning. The academy has 5 priorities:

1. Distance learning approach
2. Supporting Y11 around course completions
3. Distance pastoral care and safeguarding
4. Onsite provision for vulnerable and keyworker families
5. Mass testing

All staff meet for a weekly briefing on a Monday morning. They are reminded of the areas of focus, Employee Assistance Program, Thrive App, Mental Health First Aiders and to ensure they are looking after themselves. Staff share feedback from families and students during the briefing which has been very positive, especially the speed at which the academy can switch to online learning, as well as the regular phone calls and support for families.

The Senior Leadership Team have clarified responsibilities and delegated some responsibilities to create a more sustainable model and create clarity around expectations. For staff whose normal role is difficult to carry out at home (technicians for example) their responsibilities have shifted to support the academy in new ways. In addition, the meetings timetable has been reformatted to reduce the number of meetings but to ensure that people are able to stay connected.

The council was reassured that the new model was more sustainable and that feedback from parents showed that the academy is meeting students needs. The council asked what kinds of issues are being raised by staff at briefings.

Generally, feedback comes through curriculum meetings rather than all staff briefing. Feedback includes the difficulties of juggling work and home life as boundaries get blurred. The biggest challenge for the academy so far has been ensuring staff stay home as they are very keen to be in the academy. Some staff are worried about the return to face to face and the virus but most are looking forward to returning to a more normal structure of face to face lessons.

Mass Testing

The council received an update on the mass testing program at the academy. The academy received a visit from the military to offer logistics support for testing. The feedback was really positive. The Covid Testing Coordinators at the academy have been working on the processes needed for administer mass testing since New Years Eve when guidance for schools was available. The initial guidance was for mass testing as schools were due to reopen fully in the new year, however this changed quickly with the third national lockdown. Forty members have staff have been trained using the NHS Online testing system and the academy offers 10 testing booths. Staff and students have been able to access testing, including opening the testing facilities for evening workers such as cleaners and site teams, and offering testing for CLF primary schools who didn't have testing available to them at the time.

The academy has been able to track consent from families and keep staff and students up to date with guidance changes with regards to the impact and next steps for a positive test.

When the government announces the reopening of schools, the academy is in a good position to offer tests to all students prior to return and routinely going forward.

The council asked if the academy has any guidance about the threshold for testing that ensures it is effective and raised the current surge testing happening in the local area.

The academy hasn't had any guidance but in Years 10 & 11 there are only 16 families who have refused testing and for some of these it is because they already test at home due to jobs within the household (eg. Healthcare workers). In KS3 there are still some outstanding returns but the picture so far is also positive. Some families have chosen not to test due to sensory needs and these families are being offered help from Health care assistants should they wish.

The council agreed the picture was really encouraging and were reassured that the academy is in a strong position to reopen with safe testing in the near future.

The council asked how many positive tests the academy has administered. There were some false positives to begin with but there have been no positive tests for several weeks.

Onsite Provision

The academy received an update on the current onsite provision. There are around 190 students who access the provision across the week. Members of SLT thought carefully who comes on to site and the rooms that and how to allocate staff for their academic, emotional and EHCP needs. There are a number of students who have fortnightly safety plan and PP reviews. The provision is reviewed regularly and new students invited in if they are eligible.

Students have engaged really well and, although they are in the same room every day, staff are able to provide them challenge and exercise.

There are 60 students who access the academy full time and the rest access a part time offer which allows the academy to offer some provision to more students across the week which works really well.

The council asked how staff decide what students are offered.

Staff look at each eligible student on an individual basis and make a decision with the parents' consent.

The Council asked what capacity is and what percentage of parents have chosen to keep their children at home.

The government guidance has been used in conjunction with academy information to set limits that are reasonable. Initially the numbers were limited to 100 and gradually the numbers have increased to address students' needs.

The council asked if any key worker request have been rejected.

The academy has offered part time provision for lots of key workers and lots of parents have chosen to keep their children at home. We keep regular contact and let them know that there is provision available to them but respect their choices.

The council asked how the numbers at BBA compare to other academies in the trust.

The academy has about the same level of uptake as others in the trust.

The academy has a great team onsite and feedback is positive; students enjoy attending, they feel secure and safe and benefit from what they are offered. Lots of students thank staff at the end of the day.

Staff at the academy have a robust system for regular contact with all families including an average of around 10-12 home visits a week. The council discussed safeguarding and was reassured that the academy is responding to student needs as required including the increased safeguarding needs that are reflective of the national picture.

Distance Learning

The council received an update on the current distance learning offer from the academy. The academy has been operating some kind of distance learning package now for almost a year and has been able to hone and upskill the provision to what is used today. It is a popular system with parents and it's manageable for staff.

The academy has chosen to use a blended approach rather than 100% live lessons. There are around 50-60% live lessons and set activities to be completed. High expectations of all students are still maintained and feedback can be offered through both questioning and marking written work.

This lockdown the academy has utilised Teams classrooms to provide live feedback to students which works particular well at KS4.

According to a recent survey 87% of parents feel their children are being set the right amount of work and around 95% of parents felt that the amount of live lessons is right. Student voice is also positive.

The system has been set up in such a way that there is a bank of work available, all saved in one place, to assist with staff absence, allow for single isolating students or small groups as well as national lockdown situations. This has enabled staff to have work ready for students at home within minutes, in an organised and user friendly way.

Workload for staff has been maintained at a reasonable level and much of the great practice teachers use in the classroom can be replicated on line in terms of pedagogy. The challenges of online learning is providing quick feedback and differentiation. There are gaps emerging in extended writing and the reading gap has opened up significantly nationally. During the October work scrutiny there was clear evidence that extended writing is an issue so there are strategies in place to address this.

The council asked if there is a focus on extended writing in remote provision or is there a plan for when the school reopens fully. There is a focus on Y7 and Exam years but what is the plan for the middle years?

The last work scrutiny purposely focused on Y8 & Y9 work for that reason. There is good quality extended writing work set through online learning and teachers model it in their teaching. Y10 and Y11 are doing live writing with their teachers which is good for providing live feedback and has been successful for students. There is a range of ability and for those students who are reluctant to write at distance, there is less engagement than hoped for. Teachers are trying different approaches and there will be a focus on extended writing when the school is fully open.

The council asked for an update on extended writing in the next agenda and a review of those most affected.

The council asked if PP funding is being used in the current situation.

Everything that was included in the PP funding and Covid Catch up funding is still available to students. In particular there has been a large amount of funding used for pastoral care, there are still nurture groups and interventions being used at home such as Lexia. The council asked to discuss the reading project more fully at the next meeting.

The academy is doing its best to provide consistency but just not delivering it in the normal way.

Joint teaching has been really successful having two teachers in each online lesson.

The council received an update on the ways that online learning is being tracked to review and improve that the students are achieving at home. The academy has been on a journey to improve the amount of high quality work that is being produced by students and has seen improvements from around 10% high quality work to 85% of work submitted being high quality work submitted by students.

In the most recent week of data there was 85% attendance at live lessons and 70% of students submitting work. Data is tracked daily and staff are responding accordingly, especially for compound groups where attendance and work submission levels are lower.

The council identified a trend in PP and SEND students submitting less than 50% of the work set and that 2/5 students aren't attending lessons. What is the plan for when the academy returns fully to target those who haven't engaged as much at home.

The academy is awaiting plans for when the government announces the full opening of schools when staff will focus on the core skills students need and identifying gaps without testing students too much. Attendance will be key and being emotionally fit to be in the classroom.

Exams

The council discussed the changes to national exams this year. Exams have been cancelled for Y11 students and there has been a consultation on how grades should be awarded. The DfE and OfQual are processing the information from the consultation that closed at the end of January. The council discussed likely processes and events that the CLF as a whole is planning for and will update the council once firm plans are in place.

The trust would usually carry out mock exams after February half term, so these are likely to remain in place for reopening to identify gaps and, if necessary, be used as final evidence and be used for formative feedback purposes.

Y11 students have all been offered a careers interview and have been applying for P16 etc. Students are also reminded to look after themselves, make time for hobbies, exercise, have down time, watch TV or do some cooking.

The council complimented all staff at the academy for the phenomenal work they are doing and requested a further update at the next meeting.

Policies

The council received an update from the policies committee with regards to recent policy changes and approvals. It was highlighted that the council has responsibility under the Trips and Visits policy. This needs to be assigned through the link roles.

The council discussed some feedback from the committee with regards to sickness on trips which has been raised with the central H&S team.

Governance.

No updates

Equality and Diversity

No updates.

Matters for the Board/COAC

The council discussed how they had been assured throughout the meeting of areas that have been a focus at COAC. These are staff and student wellbeing onsite, the quality of distance learning and assessment and that the academy has performed above expectations in terms of ensuring students are getting the best possible experience in the current situation.

AOB

The council discussed the digital divide and the generosity of those who have donated devices to the academy for use by students who don't have access to IT at home. There have been donations from the DfE, the trust's ICT team and individuals which have all made a huge difference to the learning of students across the federation.

Future dates:

26th April 2021 – location: Microsoft Teams

28th June 2021 – location tbc

Approved: _____ **Date** _____