



## Bristol Brunel

Academy

### Bristol Brunel Academy Council Meeting Minutes

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 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) <b>CHAIR</b>	<b>Sponsor 1</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>
Nicola Pearce (NP)	<b>Sponsor 2</b>	Vic Boynton (VB) Vice Principal
Emma Thorn (ET)	<b>Sponsor 3</b>	
Helen Pascoe (HP) <b>VICE CHAIR</b>	<b>Sponsor 4</b>	
Emma McAvoy (EM)	<b>Sponsor 5</b>	
Naomi Soper (NS)	<b>Teacher</b>	
Sophie Elsbury (SE)	<b>Support Staff</b>	
Hanifa Tazaoui (HT) **	<b>Student Advocate</b>	
Rahana Davis (RD)	<b>Parent</b>	
Nicky Goodall (NG)	<b>Parent</b>	
Sally Apps (SA) **	<b>Executive Principal</b>	
Jon Jones (JJ)	<b>Principal</b>	
Udonna Okeke (UO) (Observer) *	<b>LA Rep</b>	
Charlotte Seavill (CS)	<b>Clerk</b>	
<b>Indicates Action</b>		
<b>Indicates question/challenge</b>		
*	<- 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: HP & UO

The meeting was deemed to be quorate.

#### 2, Declaration of Interests

No new declarations from existing members. New members were requested by email to complete a Declaration of Pecuniary Interests form electronically.

#### 3, Approve minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes from the meeting were approved.

#### 4, AC Membership

The council agreed upon link roles for all existing councillors. New councillors will be assigned link roles shortly.

#### 5, Actions and Matters Arising

1. All councillors were asked to email their current link role (if any) to the clerk. *Complete*
2. The council asked for an update on extended writing in the next agenda and a review of those most affected. *Included in agenda*

3. The council asked to discuss the reading project more fully at the next meeting. *Included in agenda*
4. It was highlighted that the council has responsibility under the Trips and Visits policy. This needs to be assigned through the link roles. *This role has been assigned to the H&S link councillor and they are aware of their responsibilities.*

### **Link Councillor Feedback**

The council discussed the recent academy councillor visit to the academy to review behaviour and processes. The report was very pleasing and the team congratulated staff.

The link councillor for H&S gave a verbal update on the work that staff have been doing with regards to risk assessment, processes and procedures for the pandemic and congratulated staff on their work. Councillors were reminded to complete their Nimble training and to ensure that all units are complete as soon as possible so that the Single Central Record can be updated.

### **Risk Register**

The council discussed the risk register which the academy uses to record any risks identified across five categories such as legal or education risks.

**The council asked how confident leaders are of the future Ofsted grade.**

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is very confident about the current Good grading and doesn't believe the academy is at risk of losing its Good grade, however with 2 years of non-standard outcomes (ie. CAG and TAG) the academy may not yet be in a position to achieve an Outstanding grade. Ofsted have resumed some visits, on a priority basis, and initial thoughts are that the academy is deemed very low risk and therefore unlikely to be visited quickly. It is hoped that national assessments will resume next academic year so that the academy has standard outcomes available to support an Ofsted visit.

**The council sought clarity around the risks in English; whether it is in literacy or in the English outcomes.**

The academy has had concerns about English outcomes in the last set of national exams, however there is clear improvement from the team. In terms of literacy, current priorities are oracy and reading.

### **Academy Council Report**

#### **Mass Testing**

Mass testing onsite has now finished and students and staff are able to voluntarily test twice weekly at home. These results can be registered with the school and the NHS. If the need became necessary, the academy could create a pop up test centre onsite.

**The council asked how the academy can be sure that students are testing at home.**

Testing is voluntary so the academy can only encourage students and families to support the testing process. Some families record their test results online, either with the school, the NHS or both, and some don't record their results. So far this term there have been 2 positive cases which is very low and very reassuring. The numbers have allowed the academy to change some activities, such as assemblies, with risk assessments and protocols in place.

**The council asked if there is data available to show the percentage of students testing and whether comparison data was available of other CLF or other local schools.**

All staff are taking part in twice weekly testing so that is reassuring. Student participation data isn't definitive as some families take test but don't log their results in the system but when testing was carried out onsite, between 30-40% of students were regularly testing. If a student tests positive then it is logged on the system and an alert is sent to various members of staff. In terms of comparison to other schools, the case rates within the school at the moment very much reflect that of the community so it is likely to be very similar to other schools.

The council discussed the two systems for families to log their results on and asked for a reminder of the process to be sent. **ACTION VB: to send the test logging details for the NHS and Flow.**

#### **Academy Improvement Plan (AIP)**

The council discussed the process SLT have completed to review the AIP and identify areas that are going well, that are still being worked on and the areas that have stalled. The areas that have stalled are mainly down to COVID restrictions or priorities.

It was raised that some staff would find a tick list style document helpful when planning and adapting schemes of work and lessons. The council discussed the work of the CLF pedagogy group that will inform all T&L frameworks across the trust and bring together all the things needed in a scheme of work or lesson.

### **Staff Wellbeing**

The council discussed the places staff can go to seek support should they need to including line management, EAP, mental health first aiders, menopause café and the Thrive app amongst others. The menopause café has been really well attended and received positive feedback particularly. There has been an evaluation of the resources available and a brief questionnaire has been carried out. All staff are being reminded that there is someone or something for everyone and encourage staff to use the resources available.

**The council asked what the role of the mental health first aider covers.**

There are three trained adult mental health first aiders in the academy who are trained to deal with someone who presents to them with information and signposting of how to support that person. It's not an ongoing support and they do not offer any counselling. Time has been set aside for the mental health first aiders so that people know when they can access them. There is also a wellbeing group.

The academy recognises that children's mental health is extremely important, especially in the current circumstances, so there is lots of work happening across the academy to support students. Time is allocated through tutor time to discuss mental health, support is in place for students in need of it and the team are preparing for the longer term or later showing needs that will arise in time.

### **Extended Writing**

The academy discussed the challenges the academy is experiencing in extended writing and the strategies and interventions that the academy has adopted to support students. The council has arranged a school visit for the T&L link councillor to carry out a review into the effectiveness of interventions to improve extended writing. **ACTION RD: to arrange a visit and create a report for the next AC meeting.**

### **Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGS) & Year 11**

The trust is using five guiding principles for the TAG process. These are:

- Wellbeing and mental health
- Securing progression to the next stage
- Fairness and equality
- A shared trust wide approach
- Meaningful course completion.

The move to TAG is highly unprecedented and very challenging for staff but the trust has been very supportive and senior and middle leaders in the academy have adapted to the new process really well.

The council discussed the types of evidence available such as coursework, mock exams, exam board assessments, or the academies assessments. One of the benefits of being part of a trust is the robust moderation process that can be carried out together.

The academy has a number of children who no longer attend for various reasons, such as being in hospital education, where evidence gathering is more challenging. There have been and continue to be a series of meetings between leaders and teachers to study how well information is being tracked, the quality of quality assurance and the collating and recording of information in a single place. By ensuring all evidence is logged in a single central place, teachers will be able to deal with in the moment with all evidence to hand.

**The council queried the current P8 data as overall the cohort is below national average as are many key groups. The council asked if there is enough time and resource to improve these grades and what the academy are doing to address this issue.**

The data shared uses approximate grades based on the evidence available at the time which was post lockdown. Since then, students have been working really hard and gathering evidence, including sitting exams and grades have improved considerably. There is another data collection shortly before the final point of TAG so will have a more up to date view shortly.

**The council ask how they can be assured that there has been a consistency in students' teachers so that teachers have a holistic understanding of each student and are able to give a fair and just judgement of their grades.**

The council discussed the inequalities in the system as there have been some staff absences and other inconsistencies. Some students may have had lots of periods of isolation as well as periods of lockdown. SLT has identified certain classes that have had more inconsistency than others over years 10 and 11 and so interventions have been put in place to help support these students. Classes have been split in two allowing smaller classes with greater time and input from the teacher and teachers are using the full breadth of evidence gathering allowances granted to them. The academy is confident that the students will be able to secure their best grades for each subject.

The council asked how students feel about TAGs and whether they are motivated, especially if they are already well on track to secure their grades or currently lacking evidence to secure their grades. The council also expressed concerns about certain subject areas that appear to be struggling and asked what interventions are in place to support in these areas.

The most able students have returned to school really motivated and engaged. The sense of urgency has really helped engage the students who are yet to secure their grades.

The subject areas in need of support are having reducing class sizes and moving teachers into groups to best suit their need. In Y11 there is a core group of students receiving personalised interventions, especially for anxiety around returning to schools and TAG. These students are being taken out of some classes to build on evidence building and literacy. These interventions are proving effective so far.

### **Attendance and Behaviour**

The council discussed the phased attendance approaches the academy is taking to ensure attendance is high. The council discussed the challenges the academy faced in X and C codes during the lockdown period as attendance data was negatively impacted. In addition, students who take time off school for religious observance are also negatively impacted in terms of their attendance data. Overall, the academy's attendance is just above national average, which is promising, but not where the academy would like to be.

### **Safeguarding**

The academy has achieved its Antbullying Alliance Certificate which is an incredible achievement. The council asked if students feel confident reporting issues of bullying. Data suggests that students know who they need to speak to if they don't feel safe and are doing so if needed. There is signposting available around school for both internal school support as well as external agencies.

### **Student Mental Health**

The council discussed the support available to students in terms of mental health, lockdown and transitioning back into school. The council asked if there has been an increase in the level of support needed in student's mental health. There is a range of ways available for students to raise a question and access support. There has been a general rise in the number of students coming forward, but this really depends on their home lives. For some, lockdown was actually really nice; being able to spend more quality time with family and enjoying the time off, but obviously for others it was a very different story. The academy is working to support all students who need it. An area of note is the lack of consistent attendance that the Y8 students have had and the resulting lack of understanding of secondary school life and routines. This, in some cases, is manifesting itself in various behaviours.

### **Student voice**

The council discussed the importance of good leadership of the student council and the ability to guide them so they are able to raise appropriate requests that can be seen through to fruition. The student council are currently addressing items such as, voting for their student voice representative on the academy council, changing the house names to more current and relevant names.

The council discussed the daily cap on how much students can spend a day in the canteen and also ensuring that all students are aware they can access a drink beyond the canteen. Also, the council discussed feedback of isolated incidents of students not being able to access lunch due to lack of funds. The academy has a strong stance on ensuring that all children have access to lunch and that no child should go hungry. If students forget lunch or don't have funds for that day then they can ask a member of staff who will support them in getting a lunch from the canteen. **ACTION JJ: Invite feedback from parents on the daily spend allowance for students in the canteen.**

### **Policy update**

The council discussed the recent policy updates including the Care Dog Policy that allows a care dog to come onto site to interact with students with needs. The new fire policy has been agreed with Skanska and changes to the website have made a change to the inclusion policy necessary for make navigating to the SEDN policy more user friendly. There is also a EAL statement to be approved at the next policy meeting. The policy committee also raised that the H&S link councillor should be aware of their responsibilities in the Fire policy and fire risk assessment. They also have responsibility in the care dog policy.

### **Safety Net**

The council briefly discussed some concerns regarding the recently rebranded Safety Net which will be addressed via line management meeting and staff training.

### **Reading project**

The council received an update on the reading project underway at BBA to develop reading ability and engagement. The council discussed the importance of all students becoming functional readers and being able to engage in reading in the wider world. A COVID lag has been identified nationally that puts Y7 readers 22 months behind where they would normally be had their education not been so heavily interrupted. The national data suggests that girls reading ability has fallen further than boys although both have experienced a decrease overall.

It is also important to ensure all students are functional readers because students who read regularly do better in all subjects at GCSE level. A recent foundation maths paper was studied in a reading age test and showed that the reading age necessary was 15 years which will be very difficult for some students currently.

There was a brief survey of all staff, which identified that all staff who completed the survey agreed that reading fluently and confidently improves a child's success at school, however not all staff recognised this as being fundamental to their role as an educator.

In a student questionnaire, the levels of enjoyment of reading are spread across all ages but more young students read habitually. Older year groups didn't feel being able to read would help them in school or get a better job when they are older. In the parent survey, parents overwhelmingly felt it was important but that parental confidence in supporting children with their reading was a barrier as was establishing routines of reading at home as students got older. Another difficulty identified is having interesting and age appropriate reading material at the suitable reading age.

The academy is therefore running a project to collect data and inform the interventions and practices in place for all students, and those identified as needing intervention.

A group of Y10 and 11 students in need of additional support have been identified and will be having 121 reading sessions for 50 minutes per week until the end of the academic year. One student has been assessed as moving from a reading age of 7 years and 2 months to 12 years and 3 months which is really positive.

Y7 students are also having their sessions to close the gap in their reading. The Y7 pastoral team are taking part and teachers are being paired with teachers carefully. Year 7 have extended reading sessions in tutor time until 3pm and years 7 and 8 are reading books until 8.45am every day. Years 7 and 8 continue to do the accelerated reader programme too.

The academy's long term goal is to have a really positive culture of reading across the school.

The academy council was really encouraged by the project because of the importance of reading. It was suggested that one of the reasons readers in years 7 & 8 read more habitually might be because of the impact of Accelerated Reader that isn't followed through in Years 9-11. The academy hopes that in 2 years' time, the impact on the interventions now on Y7, will ensure a Year 9 cohort that is engaged in reading, then and beyond.

The council also made suggestions around using volunteer reading buddies and reading to the new care dog. The council also discussed the importance of students choosing their own reading materials in different formats such as magazines and articles as well as books. The council discussed peer to peer reading interventions that will be easier to run once the current COVID restrictions ease.

The council asked how the academy is ensuring that staff are fully engaged in the project. There has been staff training focusing on the importance of the project and the reasons why students need these interventions.

The project will also form part of the next Academy Review Visit (ARV) from the central team, as well as the AC visit from the T&L link councillor.

### **AOB**

There is an academy scrutiny meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May, the outcomes of which will be shared at the next AC meeting.

There is a new environmental action group where representatives from across the academies and academy councils will meet. This will form a regular update for the group going forward.

The CLF conference is on 2<sup>nd</sup> July for councillors to attend workshops if they wish. More information will be sent nearer the time.

**Future dates:**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 – location Microsoft Teams

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 – CLF Conference

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_