Cabot Learning Federation

Minutes – HVA Academy Council Meeting

Version: Draft
Meeting Date: 16 March 2026
Location: On Site at HVA
Time: 17.30-19.30

Present:
Paul Lovely (Chair)
Kathryn Volk (Sponsor AC)
Della Hall (Teaching Staff AC)

In attendance:
Truon Ellis (Principal)
Kate Richardson (Executive Principal)
Nicola Humphries (Observer)

Apologies: Russell Mogg (Sponsor AC)

Minutes

		Action
1	**Introduction, Administration and Apologies**	
1.1	The Chair opened the meeting. Introductions were made and apologies were given.	
2	**Declarations of Interest**	
2.1	None	
3	**Academy Council Membership**	
3.1	There are sponsored, parent and support staff councillor vacancies. The meeting noted that parents and staff are required to be elected by their peers. **ACTION** – Parent and support staff elections to be actioned by interim clerk	**JF**
3.2	The chair set out his aims and ambitions for the council moving forwards.	
4	**Minutes of Previous Meeting**	
4.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. No matters were raised.	
5	**Academy Council Report**	
5.1	A copy of the academy report was circulated prior to the meeting, and a hard copy was distributed at the start of the meeting. The meeting acknowledged the changes at leadership level and amongst teaching staff. The meeting acknowledged UWE's support for a new member of staff until they formally attain QTS.	
	Inclusion	
5.2	The meeting noted the school's current inclusion profile. The return of a staff member has increased stability. Reduced timetables have been completed. SEND staff have started a new PD course. The ARV with its foci on SEND went well.	
5.3	**Is there any specific enrichment for carers?**	

	There are no specific enrichments for carers, but places are available at breakfast club for carers to attend.	
5.4	**How do you measure the impact on our staff of them visiting other schools?** Following the recent visit to Ashcombe School by TE and learning partners, reflections were logged and TE and learning partners met for a debrief. The feedback was positive and provided learning partners with an opportunity to learn from other provisions.	
5.5	**Do you decide on an end goal before the visit? Who decides on the foci?** HVA decided on the foci. The principal explains what is going to be shown and how it feeds into the teaching and learning and ethos and strategy of the school. Learning partners return to school and put what they have learned into practice. Staff visit different schools depending on the specific learning required.	
5.6	**What is the reasoning behind the change from Thrive to Hamish and Milo?** Only one staff member was Thrive trained in the school – the resource was not being used effectively. Following a review of the needs of the school, the decision was made to move to Hamish and Milo. There is more capacity for more staff to be trained, allowing for greater and more efficient use of the resource. There has been a visible impact in children provided with access to this resource already. **What is Hamish and Milo?** It is an organisation offering support to designated children. Specific tasks are chosen based on the need of the individual child. Support last for generally 6-8 weeks, the sessions are held weekly, and the same adult supports the children for the duration of the sessions. Councillors were signposted to the Hamish and Milo website for further information.	
5.7	**Is the Hamish and Milo support designed for a specific child with specific needs, or can it be used to support any child?** It can be adapted for use with any child; individual children are selected and the tasks chosen to meet their specific needs.	
	Curriculum and Teaching	
5.8	Staff attended the recent Trust Collaboration Day at the start of term 3. On 6 March (Inset day) teachers attended CLF schools in Bristol and observed the provision. T&L feedback, strengths and bright spots were discussed at the recent staff meeting on 10 March.	
5.9	**Can you elaborate what you mean when you state that readiness to learn is minus 2-3 pupils in KS1 and Year 3?** Staff are working well with children with particularly high needs and their families regarding the appropriate support which is required and available to them. Reflection is being undertaken in respect of a recent review of de-escalation strategies.	
5.10	**Is Miss Houghton still leading on phonics?** Miss H has returned to school, and a full handover is currently in process. Her cover will then move to supporting Y1 and Y2 interventions.	
	Achievement	
5.11	The next mock exams are being held w/c 23 March. Consistent staffing has been put in place on site and remotely to support Y6 pupils with SATS. The use of scaled scores to convert raw data into standardised scores was explained to the meeting.	
5.12	**A significant weakness has been identified in Maths in Year 3. What changes have you made?** There is no DOOYA data available this term. Teaching data is reviewed at weekly meetings. Book scrutiny and accountability are ongoing.	

5.13	**The Y5 cohort is currently below the level of the Y6 cohort at this stage of the year. What has changed in this cohort?** Data reviews are ongoing; the school is ensuring Pixl assessments and teacher judgements are crosschecked. SATS mocks are also now carried out exactly as the final SATS are, which will ensure pupils are as well prepared as they can be for taking those exams.	
5.14	**Will you achieve Y6 combined outcomes for disadvantaged children by the end of the academic year?** All pupils are benefitting from intense work on the basics. The team are confident that the combined outcomes will be achieved but will await mock results from next week and review thereafter. An upturn in results is expected.	
	Attendance and behaviour	
5.15	Breakfast club is having a positive impact on attendance. There have been no suspensions this term. Positive handling incidents have reduced due to de-escalation training, staff movement and parent meetings. Change can be difficult for pupils and families and is being managed appropriately.	
5.16	**How has the return to reduced timetables been?** The reduced timetables and staff changes have worked as well, as has the use of the Hub. There is a positive impact to date.	
	PD and Wellbeing	
5.17	Budget setting is now underway. Discussions are ongoing regarding enrichment opportunities provided by external providers. The meeting noted the success of World Book Day, the sleepover for charity and the proposed wetlands walk and boot sale, also to support nominated charities.	
5.18	Following receipt of matched funding to update the school's cricket nets quotes have been requested for mobile nets and static nets. The school is looking to increase links with providers close to the school e.g. football clubs etc.	
5.19	**Why does the school not have consistent connections with county sport providers/local authority events?** The connections are still in place but there are fewer events taking place. HVA attends cross county events or cross Trust events when possible. The meeting discussed the possibility of starting a CLF primary swimming gala and other cross trust events for primary schools.	
	Health and Safety	
5.20	**Have you considered raising the school's gate heights to improve security?** Concern has previously been raised about the about the ongoing risk of intruders/vandalism in the school's grounds. Discussions are ongoing as to what is the school's responsibility and what is the local authority's responsibility regarding the fencing/boundaries. Discussed safety and maintenance of potential new equipment. As the school develops, more people will attend site in and out of school hours to use the facilities, so there will be more eyes on the equipment, which should also deter potential intruders.	
	Leadership and Governance	
5.21	**Are learning partners or teaching attending the Immersion Day in T4?** ARV was held on 10 March. Teachers and learning partners from KOA visited 13 March. Somerset T&L visit scheduled for next week. **Will the Somerset visit be a mix of staff?** Current understanding is that will be teaching team rather than teachers but will see on the day.	
	Safeguarding	

5.22	**How does the change of leadership impact safeguarding capacity and parents' concerns?** Operationally SLT carry safeguarding capacity day to day as do all staff. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility – joining the safeguarding team is for strategic learning rather than impact or concerns from parents. A safeguarding culture is in place regardless of any staffing changes.	
	Safeguarding Report	
5.23	The safeguarding link councillor met with staff prior to the recent safeguarding audit. Discussions included the definition of a child in need, barriers to attendance and the positive impact of breakfast club on attendance, liability for safeguarding around school transport, the roles of Next Link and Young Victims in supporting pupils, parent contacts and priority levels on the school's information management system, the impact of mental health conditions on the relationship between staff and parents/carers. The safeguarding audit went well; the single central record (SCR) is up to date. **When is the SCR monitored?** It was monitored in T3 and was checked during the safeguarding audit.	
	Staffing and Wellbeing	
5.24	Staff absence increased prior to Christmas but improved in T3 and T4. Staff are supported by a designated colleague and are also encouraged to collaborate with colleagues across and within the CLF community. Links to health and wellbeing sites and resources are available to staff to seek support. A staff survey is completed every two years; the last survey was held in the previous academic year. A Parent and Child survey is planned to commence during w/c 16 March; staff will have an opportunity to feedback following a review of the survey results. **ACTION** – staff survey to be implemented and results reviewed by the principal and DH and a report provided to the next academy council meeting.	**TE/DH**
	Pupil Premium Report	
5.25	Chair and Principal to discuss after the meeting and report to the next meeting. DOYA data will be available later in T5. **ACTION** – Chair and Principal to update councillors at the next meeting regarding the pupil premium report.	**TE/PL**
5.26	**How do you feel about the budgeting aspect of your new role?** The principal is confident in his ability to manage costs/budgeting -he also has links outside this role which can utilise. HVA is in a good position currently; the principal is looking forward to any challenges ahead. Staffing will continue to be a key focus of budget discussions for the forthcoming year.	
7	**Policies**	
	Behaviour Policy	
7.1	**Can you talk us through some of the changes that have been made?** Amendments made to section 7.1 were noted. Changes have been made to recommended/scripted language – reference 'Ready to Learn' and school values and language. Amended criteria to Refocus and Reconsider followed by Revoke and then Reflection, ending with Rebuild as presently exists. On the final page we have realigned areas of behaviour into groupings based on impact and negativity. The severity increases as the category number increases. This aligns the nature of the behaviour with the appropriate category of inappropriate behaviour	

7.2	In para 11.2 an AC noted that bullying could be a one-off incident too. The principal reviewed the policy wording against the anti-bullying alliance definition of the word 'bullying' which is used across the CLF Trust.	
7.3	**The policy contains the phrase "I would be angry too if..." - is this appropriate or does it validate the child's anger?** Staff use language to help a child verbalise their frustration/s, but it was acknowledged the use of the word angry in this context could be seen as validating the child's reaction.	
7.4	**<u>ACTION</u> –** TE to amend the behaviour policy as follows: - • Delete references to Thrive within the policy • Update the name/s of the DSLs • Replace the word 'angry' as discussed in 7.4 with a more appropriate word that doesn't validate the child's anger. Once amended the principal will share the policy with the interim clerk who will upload to Governor Hub for marking as signed.	**TE**
7.5	The interim clerk/governance administrator confirmed to the meeting that the quorum for marking policies as signed on Governor Hub is now three (2 non-staff and 1 staff**).**	
8	**Matters For The Attention Of The Board**	
8.1	None	
9	**Any Other Business**	
9.1	None	
10	**Close of Meeting**	
10.1	The meeting closed at 19.10	

<u>ACTIONS</u>

3.1	**<u>ACTION</u>** – JF to commence and run parent and support staff elections.	**JF**
5.24	**<u>ACTION</u>** – staff survey to be implemented and results reviewed by the principal and DH and a report provided to the next academy council meeting.	**TE/DH**
5.25	**<u>ACTION</u>** – Chair and Principal to update councillors at the next meeting regarding the pupil premium report.	**TE/PL**
7.4	**<u>ACTION</u> –** Principal to amend the behaviour policy as follows: - • Delete references to Thrive within the policy • Update the name/s of the DSLs • Replace the word 'angry' as discussed in 7.4 with a more appropriate word that doesn't validate the child's anger. Once amended the principal will share the policy with the interim clerk who will upload to Governor Hub for marking as signed.	**TE/JF**