

Minutes – Redstart Primary School Academy Council Meeting

Version: Draft
Meeting Date: Thursday, 2nd October 2025
Location: Redstart Primary School
Time: 17:30-19:30

Chair: Sapphire Lunch (SL)
Attendees: Martin Richards (MR) Parent Councillor
 Nikki Tilley (NT) Parent Councillor
 Jen Hill (JeH) Staff Councillor
 Carlie Stroulger (CS) Staff (Support) Councillor
 Joanne Thompson (JT) Sponsor Councillor
 Jo Draper Sponsor Councillor

In attendance: Rebecca Collins Principal
 Tracy French Executive Principal
 Tessa Clark Clerk

Apologies: Jacqueline Hiscox (JiH) Sponsor Councillor

Minutes

		Action
1	Introduction, Administration and Apologies	
1.1	SL opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees.	
1.2	Apologies as above.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	No declarations of interest were made.	
2.2	SL reminded all councillors to complete their declarations on Governor Hub.	
3	Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.	
3.2	Updates on actions from the previous meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 7.1: RC uploaded all results data, including pupil premium outcomes, to Governor Hub. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 9.9: TC uploaded the correct version of the Councillor Expenses Policy to Governor Hub. Item 10.1: RC uploaded the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP) to Governor Hub prior to the meeting. Item 12.1: RC investigated concerns regarding high level of screen time in class and shared a response via Governor Hub. This update was also reflected in the previous minutes. 	
4	Chairs update	
4.1	SL confirmed that there are currently two sponsor councillor vacancies.	
4.2	SL highlighted that the Academy Council Handbook is available in the resource section on Governor Hub.	
4.3	The Code of Conduct will be uploaded to Governor Hub shortly.	
4.4	A brief review of the strategic meeting was shared.	
5	Election for Vice Chair	
5.1	MR was confirmed as Vice Chair.	
6	Appoint/ confirm link roles	
6.1	<p>Link roles were confirmed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SL: Disadvantaged NT: Safeguarding JT: SEND (to be reviews when JiH returns, as they may wish to take on this role) <p>ACTION: Link roles to be reviewed at the next meeting, particularly the SEND role.</p>	
7	Training	
7.1	All councillors present have completed their mandatory safeguarding and Governance Essentials training.	
8	Academy Council report	
8.1	Results Review – All in report that was circulated prior to the meeting.	
8.1.1	Q: Can we have the overall attendance results?	
8.1.2	<p>A: RC explained that detailed attendance data is available per pupil, but it was difficult to access full-year figures. TF was able to locate the overall data, which RC agreed would be helpful to have more readily available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall attendance: 94.8% PP attendance (Years 1-6): 96% Overall PP attendance: 91.1% <p>The target for PP attendance is 95%, which was not met, although the overall school attendance was met.</p> <p>ACTION: JT to explore how to access year-to-date attendance data for PP pupils.</p>	
8.1.3	Q: What were the GLD (Good Level of Development) results for Reception in 2023-24 for comparison?	
8.1.4	<p>A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024: All pupils -67%, PP pupils - 67% 2023: All pupils - 70% (PP data not accessible due to system changes). 	
8.1.5	Q: Was the GLD results for PP pupils 17%? How many children does that represent?	

8.1.6	A: RC confirmed that 2 out of 12 PP pupils achieved GLD. To meet GLD, children must achieve across multiple areas. While most areas had achievement rates between 70–90%, reading and writing were lower (68% for all pupils), which impacted overall GLD outcomes.	
8.1.7	Q: Is there a crossover between PP and SEND in Reception?	
8.1.8	A: Yes. Of the 12 PP pupils, 11 were also identified as SEND, with significant needs including cognition, learning, speech and language. Two pupils had EHCPs.	
8.1.9	Q: Are you still conducting baseline assessments for the current cohort? What trends are emerging?	
8.1.10	A: JH shared that the current cohort presents fewer SEND needs. Most pupils are verbal and toilet trained, which contrasts with last year, where toileting support significantly impacted TA capacity. Phonics interventions have begun, with early identification of pupils needing support in sound recognition and oral blending. Emotional regulation remains a barrier for some pupils, affecting their ability to access learning.	
8.1.11	Q: What support is in place for pupils with emotional regulation needs?	
8.1.12	A: A TA is released during break times to run nurture groups focused on emotional skills, turn-taking, and gross motor development, which also supports writing readiness. The main focus until Christmas is on prime areas, with specific areas continuing alongside.	
8.1.13	Q: Are parents engaged and supportive of these interventions?	
8.1.14	A: JH confirmed strong parental engagement, particularly for pupils with emotional and social needs. Weekly phonics updates are shared via Tapestry. A recent phonics information session saw increased attendance, with 15 parents attending before pick-up and 5 in the evening. Parental engagement is lower in the current Year 1 cohort.	
8.1.15	Q: Last year's improvement plan stated success would be measured by GLD aligning with national averages. Given this wasn't achieved, why isn't it reflected in the current AIP?	
8.1.16	A: RC explained that early writing is included as a priority in the current AIP. While GLD outcomes were lower than hoped, this was reflective of the specific needs of the cohort, which included a high proportion of pupils with additional needs and summer-born children. The current cohort presents fewer barriers to learning, and the school is optimistic about improved outcomes this year.	
8.1.17	Q: why didn't you make that point in the AIP.	
8.1.18	A: RC responded that the AIP does reference the challenges with writing and acknowledges that there is still work to do. Last year was the first year of implementing the Unlocking Sounds programme, and staff were still familiarising themselves with the approach. This year, the delivery is more refined, and targeted writing interventions are being introduced earlier. RC added that once children are confidently accessing Unlocking Sounds in Reception, it will have a positive impact on writing outcomes by Year 6. However, embedding a new programme takes time, and the full impact is expected to be seen in years two and three of implementation. She also noted that there was a shared sense of disappointment about last year's outcomes, but highlighted that unforeseen challenges—such as staffing absence and the complexity of the cohort—had a significant impact.	

8.1.19	Q: What has been the outcome of TA-led interventions?	
8.1.20	A: Interventions have been tailored to need. For example, TAs are supporting speech and language in Years 1 and 2. In KS2, TAs are delivering subject-specific interventions, such as maths, and working collaboratively to replicate successful models across year groups. Many KS2 TAs also support ELSA and nurture provision. Staffing is deployed flexibly to ensure expertise is used effectively, including targeted group work such as block therapy.	
8.2	Safeguarding including link role + Termly report	
8.2.1	Q: Are there currently any children with FIS support?	
8.2.2	A: No. One case has transitioned, and a couple have been closed. There are currently no active FIS cases, although this fluctuates regularly.	
8.2.3	Q: Are any children currently on part-time timetables?	
8.2.4	A: Yes, two children are on part-time timetables, the same number as last year. One case is more complex and is being followed up as part of absence monitoring.	
8.2.5	Q: Mental health was identified as a key theme – what support is in place?	
8.2.6	A: Support includes referrals to CAMHS and Young Somerset, in-house ELSA provision and a trained Mental Health First Aider. RC also met with the Senior Mental Health Lead last week. Year 5 and 6 pupils are being screened for mental health needs, with follow-up interventions such as safe-space messaging. For pupils struggling to attend school, staff meet them at designated points and offer interventions including sensory circuits and emotional regulation groups (e.g., Zones of Regulation). Staff are also supporting parents' mental health needs. Teachers on the playground are aware of which families may need additional support. Referrals are made where appropriate, and frontline staff offer a welcoming environment, including informal conversations and wellbeing check-ins. The school continues to prioritise openness and accessibility in its safeguarding approach.	
8.3	Risk Register	
8.3.1	Q: Has the Risk Register been updated?	
8.3.2	A: RC opened a discussion about the current status of the Risk Register, which is based on the CLF template. RC acknowledged that further time is needed to review and refine the document, ensuring that outdated items are actioned or removed. Although the register was completed and uploaded, it has not been revisited since. The intention is to actively review and update it going forward. Action: SL and RC to meet and review the Risk Register, ensuring it is current and reflects valid risks and actions.	
9	Agenda Planning for year	
9.1	SL suggested that, based on the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP) and recent discussions, the Academy Council should agree on specific focus areas for upcoming meetings to ensure more targeted information is shared. TF explained that the AIP is aligned with the CLF Top Sheet, which outlines trust-wide priorities. Each school's Top Sheet contributes to these overarching goals. The three key themes identified are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in People 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantage • Partnerships <p>Proposed termly focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term 2: Investing in People • Term 3: Disadvantage (including a specific lens on SEND, as raised by SL, due to concerns from parents about communication and provision, as mentioned in AIP) • Term 4: Partnerships • Term 6: To be confirmed <p>Each meeting will include updates aligned to these themes, providing clarity for the Principal on what to present.</p>	
9.1.1	Q: SEND is listed on the AIP again this year, with similar concerns raised two years ago—particularly around communication with parents. Why hasn't this been resolved?	
9.1.2	A: RC explained that two years ago, the school was supported by a SENCO working remotely. Since then, a new SENCO has been appointed, and last year's focus was on embedding systems and improving identification processes in line with the SEND Code of Practice. Parental satisfaction remains a key area for development. Surveys are conducted annually, so improvements may be reflected in the next cycle. While challenges remain, there has been significant progress, and the school is actively working to improve provision and communication.	
9.1.3	SL acknowledged that some targets will naturally carry over year to year, but emphasised the importance of reviewing progress when issues persist.	
9.1.4	It was noted that while the plan may remain the same, the approach should be different. A SEND link walk is planned, which will help answer some questions.	
9.1.5	RC added that while progress has been made in areas such as SEND and writing, outcomes are not yet where the school wants them to be—hence their continued inclusion in the AIP.	
9.1.6	Q: The AIP mentions a "Governor Day" – what does that involve?	
9.1.7	<p>A: RC explained that this refers to opportunities for Academy Councillors to engage more actively in school life, such as curriculum days, learning walks, and intervention reviews. Councillors are welcome to attend events that align with their link roles or areas of interest.</p> <p>JT shared that attending the peer review day was valuable. RC added that councillors are welcome to attend the safeguarding review in the spring/summer term and the Somerset Safeguarding Audit at the end of January.</p>	
9.1.8	Q: Will councillors be expected to take the initiative to attend events?	
9.1.9	<p>A:RC confirmed that councillors are welcome at any time and that key opportunities will be shared via Governor Hub to support planning and engagement.</p> <p>Action: RC to upload details of upcoming events (e.g., ARV, safeguarding audit, curriculum days) to Governor Hub so councillors can express interest in attending.</p>	
10	Policies that require review	
10.1	Attendance police – reviewed and agreed by the Academy Council.	

	Health and safety policy – has been circulated; however, only one person has signed this off. Action: TC will put a reminder on Governor Hub for all Academy Council members to review and sign the Health and Safety Policy.	
11	Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC	
11.1	No matters for the Board.	
12	Any Other Business	
12.1	Concerns had previously been raised regarding stability in the Reception class. The Academy Council welcomed the positive update that a new Reception teacher has now been successfully recruited.	
13	Date of Next Meeting	
13.1	Thursday, 4 th December 2025	

ACTIONS

6.1	ACTION: Link roles to be reviewed at the next meeting, particularly the SEND role.	ALL
8.1.2	ACTION: JT to explore how to access year-to-date attendance data for PP pupils.	JT
8.3.2	Action: SL and RC to meet and review the Risk Register, ensuring it is current and reflects valid risks and actions.	SL & RC
9.1.9	Action: RC to upload details of upcoming events (e.g., ARV, safeguarding audit, curriculum days) to Governor Hub so councillors can express interest in attending.	RC
10.1	Action: TC will put a reminder on Governor Hub for all Academy Council members to review and sign the Health and Safety Policy.	TC