

Minutes – Woodlands Academy Council

Meeting Date: 12 February 2026
Location: Via Teams
Time: 3.30pm

Members	Lance Mason (LM)	Sponsor Councillor
	Catherine Bennett (CB)	Sponsor Councillor
	Sarah Rowley (SR)	Sponsor Councillor
	<i>Vacancy</i>	Parent Councillor
	<i>Vacancy</i>	Parent Councillor
	Katherine Brockett (KB)	Teacher Councillor
	Carey King (CK)	Support Staff Councillor
	Andy Kendall (AK)	Sponsor Councillor

Apologies

In Attendance	Kate Richardson (KR)	Director of Education
	Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk
	Vicky Counsell (VC)	Senior Principal

Item	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies	Action
1.1	The meeting commenced at 3.30pm and LM welcomed everyone.	
1.2	Apologies were received from	
2.0	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	Catherine Bennett advised that she works for Trust in Learning Academies (TiLA) and is an Academy Councillor at Waycroft Academy.	
3.0	Academy Council Membership	
3.1	There are two parent AC vacancies.	
4.0	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be an accurate record.	
5.0	Actions and Matters Arising	
5.1	None.	
6.0	Academy Council Report - VC	
6.1	The Academy Councillors noted the improved format of the Principal's report. VC advised that there may be a new template released soon which reflects the new OFSTED Inspection Framework.	
6.2	What three things would you want us all to celebrate at the moment? The Y6 mock on mock outcomes are very positive for this stage of the year and we are pleased with the improvement in their attitude. Our school has more than 50% of the cohort eligible for free school meals which is more than double the national average. Katherine is very good at ensuring there are consistent boundaries in the class but she also has high expectations, and she has an excellent relationship with them.	

	The work we are doing with Bristol Charities is gaining traction and we know that we need to give our children lots of extra-curricular experiences. Bristol Charities will visit over a month-long period to provide enrichment and aim to provide after school clubs. The Families Hub in the Children's Centre will help us to sign-post key community events like healthy cooking. The Maths and English work has been very reflective and Katherine embraces the resource that the Trust offers and works closely with the Trust Leads. Laura Dowling is going to take over the Maths Lead and Katherine will retain the English Lead and have more time to focus on oracy. This is key because many of our Nursery and Reception children have language delay which is a national picture. We are shortening our English units from three weeks and we've removed the initial write so that they can do a deep dive of a key text and then use it as a scaffold to support improved outcomes at the end of a unit. A few children have commented that they find the more talking and practising technique is challenging in Maths, but it's required for them to develop their reasoning and for the majority of children it's working well. The Maths Lead for the Trust reviewed individual children to see how the planning can be adjusted to meet their need.	
6.3	What are the three most important areas for improvement? Provision for learners with SEND remains a key area of continued development. We have learning support plans for children on the SEND register, and we meet with parents every other term to discuss what's in place to support them. We don't want our SEND children to have a separate curriculum because we are aspirational for them therefore we need to continue to develop how we scaffold for learners and give them adapted resources where required. We need to ensure that the planning is adapted in every curriculum area so that their learning is accessible. Attendance has shown improvement but overall, our year to date has dropped from 92.2% to 91.8% following scarlet fever cases within the school. We've also had children who have had operations and therefore their absence has been unavoidable. We are recruiting for an Attendance and Family Support Officer, and the advert will indicate that the attendance part of the role takes priority.	
6.4	If a child is out of school for two weeks how do you help them catch up? It's tricky because if they are unwell then they aren't able to concentrate on learning, but if they have been sick and have to stay off school for 24 hours then we could consider how we could support them to keep learning. We use a lot of resources that can't be replicated at home which makes it challenging. Mike is running clinics on a Monday after school for teachers to talk about individual children.	
6.5	How are you supporting our PP children? The PP strategy has been updated. 53% of our school are PP and we receive 102k in funding. We've identified our objectives and how we will determine if we've been successful. We need our children to have a sense of confidence and be able to speak in public. The strategy explains how we will spend the funding to achieve our aims which includes professional development for staff, oracy development, and continued work with the English Hub to support our teaching of phonics.. They are supportive and give us clear actions to complete. Across the school and specifically in Y6, the use of TAs and PIXL has been really impactful because we can use the data to determine where is best to invest our time for children entitled to PP funding. Are the PIXL gaps shared with the parents and children? We don't currently because it could knock their confidence, but we do share the mock data with our Y6 children because it's motivating. Parents are given the children's DOYA grade four times per year after an assessment window.	

	Wider strategies include the attendance team, the Breakfast Club, contributions towards trips and residentials and part of the Family Support Worker role is funded by that. We are also buying some resources to support positive play and physical movement during lunchtime. We are focusing on our Woodlands values and learning behaviours and a sense of belonging. We have some diversity within our school and therefore we celebrate festival days from other cultures. The refreshing of emotions coaching to support children to develop their emotional literacy is very supportive of children. We've introduced personal check-ins for children who are causing some disruption to learning and if necessary we carry out a reflection with them so that they can see how their actions impact on their learning and that of their peers.	
6.6	KB: The profile of writing has been raised, and staff are talking about it and sharing professional conversations around it. The mock data was positive with some real successes and improvement. There is an attainment gap for combined between PP and non-PP children, almost all our children with SEND are also PP children and each child represents 4.5%. VC: KB is an LA qualified writing moderator which is very beneficial for our school. KB: Our Maths outcomes has improved too, but the PP gap remains which we are addressing. We have a couple of children who have gaps in learning who we are targeting to ensure they are ready and we are already at a higher standard so far this year than we were at the end of 2025. We've done a question level analysis so that we can see what we still need to cover in the curriculum before we move to revision and we are going to introduce a reasoning paper every week. We are going to support their stamina because during SATs there is one day when they need to take two tests and this class finds that very challenging. We've been offering arithmetic drop-in sessions which has been well received. There are 20 children attending SATs Club which is very encouraging. The Reading is doing well, but we don't want to lose that momentum so we are looking at how we can adapt the morning timetable to focus on building their stamina.	
6.7	Safeguarding: AK: I review the safeguarding trends with Sian Adams and reviewed the SCR. The Trust used to renew DBSs every five years but are now moving away from that approach. KR: We are trying to get as many people as possible on the update service and scrutinising where we can accept a DBS from another institution if it's recent. Are there any safeguarding trends that the Academy Council needs to be aware of? AK: Child on child incidents seem to be restricted to playground time. KB: The children have an improved understanding of safeguarding and refresh emails go to the staff with a theme of the week which we cover with the children, and the children share their ideas in a floor book.	
	VC reminded all the Academy Councillors to record their visits so that the school can evidence that they have engaged with the school.	
6.8	ACTION: CB to share the Link Visit Form that she uses at Waycroft. <i>[Post meeting addendum – action completed during the meeting]</i>	CB

6.9	LM and VC have reviewed the risk register and will link with the compliance team to ensure that its robust.	
7.0	Policies	
7.1	• Anti-Bullying • Admissions The Academy Councillors approved the above two policies.	
8.0	Matters for the attention of the Board /COAC	
8.1	None	
9.0	AOB	
9.1	None	