

# Minutes – Waycroft Academy Council

**Meeting Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026

**Location:** WCA

**Time:** 5.00pm

**In Attendance:** Joseph Fox-Bowen (JFB) Sponsor Councillor & Chair  
Catherine Bennett (CB) Sponsor Councillor  
Vacancy Support Staff Councillor  
Charlotte Regan (CR) Parent Councillor  
Vacancy Sponsor Councillor  
Vacancy Sponsor Councillor

**Absent:** Chris George (CG) Sponsor Councillor  
Paul Blenkinsopp (PB) Parent Councillor

**Apologies:** Rachael Wright (RW) Teacher Councillor  
Sam Hodder (SH) Senior Principal  
Sue Burns (SB) Clerk

**In Attendance:** Adam Smith (AS) Principal

| Item | Welcome, Introductions and Apologies                                                                                                                                                                     | Action |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1.1  | JFB welcomed everyone to the meeting.                                                                                                                                                                    |        |
| 1.2  | No apologies were necessary.                                                                                                                                                                             |        |
| 1.3  | The quorum is 3 – only one of whom can be a Staff Councillor. If there is less than 3 in the meeting then the meeting cannot make any decisions or approve any policies, or minutes of the last meeting. |        |
| 1.4  | The meeting was quorate.                                                                                                                                                                                 |        |
| 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 Woodlands Academy.                                                                       |        |
| 3.0  | Minutes of Previous Meeting & Actions                                                                                                                                                                    |        |
| 3.1  | The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be an accurate record.                                                                                                                                |        |
| 4.0  | Chairs Update                                                                                                                                                                                            |        |
| 4.1  | The CLF Central Team has reminded Academy Councils that they should only have the following Link Roles: Safeguarding, SEND, and Disadvantaged.                                                           |        |
| 4.2  | Link role training will be provided in July.                                                                                                                                                             |        |
| 5.0  | Academy Council Membership                                                                                                                                                                               |        |
| 5.1  | There remains a Support Staff Councillor vacancy but there have been no expressions of interest.                                                                                                         |        |
| 5.2  | A Parent has applied to join the Academy Council and is the process of completing the paperwork.                                                                                                         |        |
| 6.0  | Training and Link Roles                                                                                                                                                                                  |        |

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| 6.1 | CLF Central have reminded all Academy Councils that they only need the following link roles: Safeguarding, SEND, and Disadvantaged.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
| 6.2 | Link Role training will be provided in July.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| 7.0 | <b>Academy Council Report</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
|     | <b>Behaviour</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
| 7.1 | <p><b>How would you describe behaviour across the school?</b></p> <p>I believe behaviour across the school is very good. The children are lovely, and I am pleased with the way pupils move around the school and manage transitions. Overall, I am happy with the standards of behaviour and conduct that we see across the school.</p>                                     |  |
| 7.2 | <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
| 7.3 | <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
| 7.4 | <p><b>What are your expectations for the current Year 5 cohort as they move into Year 6?</b></p> <p>I am very optimistic about the current Year 5 cohort and believe they will be a strong Year 6 group from September. We are already seeing positive signs, and I hope this will establish a positive legacy that continues as future cohorts move through the school.</p> |  |
| 7.5 | <p><b>How has the current Year 6 cohort performed?</b></p> <p>I would like to acknowledge the current Year 6 cohort for the way they have managed challenges this year. Despite some difficulties, they have held things together very well and should be credited for their resilience and positive contribution to the school.</p>                                         |  |
| 7.6 | <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
| 7.7 | The number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) has increased significantly. Two years ago, we had two EHCPs in place and we now have 24. The most noticeable increase has occurred over the last six months, with numbers rising rapidly during that period.                                                                                                         |  |
| 7.8 | <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
|     | <b>Attendance</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
| 7.9 | <p><b>What is the current attendance?</b></p> <p>Attendance remains broadly positive; however, I am concerned that our overall attendance has fallen to 94.5%. Whilst a reduction of around 1% may appear small, it is significant in</p>                                                                                                                                    |  |

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|      | attendance terms. I am finding this particularly frustrating, as it represents a noticeable decline from our previous position.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
| 7.10 | <p><b>What are the main factors contributing to the decline in attendance?</b></p> <p>The primary factor has been an increase in term-time holidays. We have seen a significant number of parents taking children out of school for holidays, which is having a direct impact on attendance figures. This appears to be linked, in part, to wider cost-of-living pressures, with families seeking more affordable holiday options outside peak periods. Attendance remains a challenge for many schools, and lower daily attendance figures are being reported elsewhere despite generally strong attendance overall.</p> |  |
| 7.11 | <p><b>Are there any groups of pupils whose attendance is causing particular concern?</b></p> <p>Yes. A key area of concern is the attendance of pupils receiving SEND Support. This group does not include pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), but rather those who are on the SEND register without an EHCP. Attendance for this group is currently 85.5%, which is significantly lower than that of the wider school population. Given that this represents approximately 65 pupils, it is a substantial group and therefore an important focus for our attendance work.</p>                          |  |
| 7.12 | <p><b>What actions are being taken to improve attendance?</b></p> <p>I meet with Naomi, our Family Support Worker, on an almost weekly basis to review attendance. Together, we monitor all pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. We review attendance data in detail and consider not only overall figures but also recent trends. For example, some pupils may still have low attendance overall, but if attendance has improved significantly over the last six weeks, further intervention may not be necessary at that stage.</p>                                                                                 |  |
| 7.13 | <p><b>What external support is available for attendance concerns?</b></p> <p>We benefit from very strong support from our Education Welfare Officer, Tom Watson. He is highly effective and one of the best Education Welfare Officers I have worked with. He works closely with the school, communicating with families and providing appropriate challenge where attendance concerns persist.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| 7.14 | <p><b>How does the school challenge persistent absence?</b></p> <p>Where there are concerns regarding attendance, we issue letters to parents and may request medical evidence to support absences. I recognise that obtaining formal medical evidence has become increasingly difficult for families; however, we continue to work with parents to gather appropriate documentation where possible. This may include screenshots of NHS appointments, messages from healthcare providers, or other relevant evidence to support the absence.</p>                                                                         |  |
|      | <b>Personal Development</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |
| 7.15 | I believe personal development remains a strength of the school. We provide a wide range of opportunities and enrichment activities for pupils, and there is always a great deal happening across the school. Recent examples include the Year 6 residential camp, participation in the Youth Parliament, sports afternoons, and the Year 6 Bristol Football League. These opportunities make a valuable contribution to pupils' wider development.                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| 7.16 | Pupils have participated in a range of activities this year. The Youth Parliament has continued successfully under Susie's leadership, with pupils representing the school extremely well. We have also held sports afternoons and seen positive engagement in sporting competitions, including the Bristol Football League, where the Year 6 team has performed particularly well.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| 7.17 | We have carefully reviewed the Year 2 residential camp and have concluded that it is no longer meeting the needs of all pupils and families. The school has run a Year 2 camp for many years, and I have always valued the experience. However, despite a successful camp this year, increasing challenges have arisen around participation and parental concerns.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| 7.18 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |

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| 7.19 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
|      | <b>Safeguarding</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
| 7.20 | We now include a safeguarding item as part of our weekly staff briefing every Friday. This has proved very useful, as it ensures safeguarding remains a regular focus and provides staff with ongoing updates and training. We receive weekly safeguarding information both from the Cabot Learning Federation and from Andrew Hall, who shares national safeguarding updates and trends. These updates have helped ensure that staff continue to strengthen and refresh their safeguarding knowledge throughout the year                       |  |
| 7.21 | <b>How are safeguarding concerns monitored within the school?</b><br>Emma, Naomi and I meet weekly in our capacity as Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to review safeguarding matters. I have taken advice from the Trust Safeguarding Lead (Steve Bane) who has recommended that the Principal doesn't hold the DSL role.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
|      | <b>SEND</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| 7.22 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| 7.23 | <b>How will the Anchor Provision operate from September?</b><br>The provision will operate across two rooms. One space will support pupils with more complex communication needs, including non-verbal pupils, and the second will focus on pupils with autism and communication and language needs. Resources are being purchased to support this development, and orders have already been placed.<br><br>. We remain fully committed to being an inclusive school and believe that our provision should meet the individual needs of pupils. |  |
|      | <b>Outcomes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| 7.24 | The Year 6 SATs results have now been released. Teacher assessment for writing is currently 77% at the expected standard, with two pupils assessed at greater depth. We recognise that there is still work to do around greater depth moderation and ensuring consistency in judgements. Emma, our Vice Principal, is a Bristol writing moderator, which provides valuable expertise and support for our internal moderation processes.                                                                                                         |  |

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| 7.25 | <p>Whilst we do not yet have the final validated outcomes, we are hopeful that mathematics results will show improvement. We have invested considerable effort into raising standards in mathematics this year and are optimistic that this will be reflected in the results. We are slightly more concerned about reading outcomes, as there are indications that these may be lower than we would like. We are aware that a number of other schools have reported similar concerns.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| 7.26 | <p><b>How do the predicted combined outcomes compare with previous years?</b></p> <p>Last year, the combined expected standard figure was 48%, which was below where we wanted it to be. Based on current information, we are hopeful that this year's combined outcome will be between 60% and 62%, which would be much closer to national figures. We are looking forward to seeing whether this improvement is reflected in the final outcomes. We have benefited from significant support from the Headteacher of Summerhill Academy, who has visited the school on four or five occasions to share approaches that have successfully improved pupil outcomes in their setting. This support has been extremely valuable, and we are hopeful that the impact of this work will be evident in our results.</p> |  |
| 7.27 | <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
| 7.28 | <p><b>What are the outcomes of the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check?</b></p> <p>The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check pass rate is 79%. Emily, our Year 2 teacher, and Betsi have led this work effectively throughout the year. The pupils who did not achieve the pass mark are either within our Anchor or enhanced provision or have experienced very low attendance. Our focus will be on ensuring that these pupils continue to make strong progress and receive appropriate support next year.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |
| 7.29 | <p>Year 2 outcomes are particularly encouraging, with nine pupils successfully passing the phonics screening check. We now have two consecutive years in which almost all pupils have entered Key Stage 2 having met the expected phonics standard. The Year 2 pass rate increased from 89% last year to 98% this year, demonstrating strong outcomes and effective intervention. This gives us confidence that pupils are entering Key Stage 2 with the phonics knowledge they need to access the wider curriculum.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
| 7.30 | <p>Although the overall pass rate of 79% is slightly lower than in some previous years, there were a small number of pupils who were close to the pass threshold. Two pupils scored in the mid-teens and had attendance issues that affected their learning. In one case, the pupil was not present for the main screening period and completed the assessment at a later date. We believe that improved attendance and greater continuity of learning could have had a positive impact on some pupils' outcomes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
| 7.31 | <p><b>What were the results of the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check?</b></p> <p>We were extremely pleased with the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check results. Pupils achieved an average score of 23.9 out of 25, and 81% of pupils scored either 24 or 25 marks. These outcomes represent a significant improvement on previous years and compare very favourably across the trust.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| 7.32 | <p>A number of factors have contributed to this success. Staffing consistency has played an important role, with strong teaching and continuity within Year 4. We have also benefited from support from Katie Moore, the Trust Mathematics Lead, who introduced the Ashley Down Times Tables approach. The combination of high-quality teaching, consistent practice and trust support appears to have had a very positive impact on pupils' outcomes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| 8.0  | <b>Safeguarding</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |

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| 8.1  | Paul Blenkinsopp is the Safeguarding Link Academy Councillor. Paul recently completed a safeguarding monitoring visit, which provided an opportunity to review safeguarding arrangements and he has been visiting regularly and checking the Single Central Record.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| 9.0  | Policies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| 9.1  | None.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| 10.0 | Link Visits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |
| 10.1 | Chris George is the SEND Link Academy Councillor and has visited Freya Winsley the SENCO.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
| 10.2 | Chris's Link Report is available on Governorhub.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
| 12.0 | Matters for the attention of the Board /COAC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |  |
| 12.1 | None.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
| 13.0 | AOB                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| 13.1 | <p><b>How did the school respond to the recent extreme weather and school closure guidance?</b></p> <p>The recent period of extreme weather presented a challenge for both schools and parents. The Department for Education requested information from schools regarding whether they remained fully open, partially open or closed, and schools were required to make difficult decisions in response to the weather warnings. I felt that the decision to close schools on the Wednesday and Thursday was relatively straightforward due to the red weather warnings in place and was likely a decision that parents could understand and support.</p> |  |
| 13.2 | <p><b>What impact did the weather have on attendance?</b></p> <p>Attendance on the Friday morning following the closures was 69%. This was notable and suggested that a significant number of families remained cautious following the period of extreme weather. The situation highlighted the wider impact that severe weather can have on attendance, even after schools have reopened.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |