Minutes – Kingsmead Academy Council Meeting

Version:	Approved (Public Minutes)
Meeting Date:	Tuesday, 16 June 2026
Location:	Kingsmead Academy
Time:	6-8pm

Chair:	Colin Mister (CM)	Sponsor Councillor
Attendees:	Stuart Smith (SS)	Staff Councillor
	Laura Jordan (LJ)	Sponsor Councillor
	Stefanie Back (SB)	Sponsor Councillor
	Jake Bale (JB)	Support Staff Councillor
	Chris Walder (CW)	Parent Councillor
	Eva Helm (EH)	Sponsor Councillor
	Stefanie Beck	Sponsor Councillor
In attendance:	John Eddy (JE)	Principal
	Cameron Shaw (CE)	Executive Principal
	Charlie Pierce (CP)	Vice Principal
	Laura Chesterfield (LC)	Observer
	Sally Bryant (TC)	Observer

Apologies:

Minutes

		Action
1	**Introduction, Administration and Apologies**	
1.1	The Chair welcomed councillors to the meeting and introductions were made. No apologies were received.	
1.2	The Deputy-Head of Governance, introduced herself and confirmed she was attending in an observational capacity.	
2	**Declarations of Interest**	
2.1	No declarations of interest were made.	
3	**Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**	
3.1	Minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.	
3.2	Matters Arising / Action Updates: • 5.4.7 – ARV Feedback - Carried forward. **ACTION:** JE to circulate ARV feedback to councillors as soon as possible.	**JE**

	• 6.10.1 and 6.11 – Safeguarding Structure and Capacity Update: See item 6. • 7.2 – Staff Well-being **ACTION:** CM and SS to meet to discuss staff well-being priorities and report back - Carried forward. • 10.2 – Survey Requirements Status: Update awaited.	**CM & SS**
4	**Chairs Update**	
4.1	The Chair provided an update following attendance at the recent Chairs of Academy Councils (COAC) meeting. Key points included: • A strong focus on Ofsted preparation, including upcoming changes from September 2026 (all inspections to be HMI-led, with no short inspections). • New Terms of Reference to be implemented from 2026, alongside updated guidance on suspensions and exclusions. • Increased emphasis from Ofsted on stakeholder engagement, particularly evidencing effective engagement with pupils and parents. • A continued focus on inclusion, recognising this extends beyond SEND to include disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. • Recognition from inspectors that SEND can impact attendance. • The Inclusion Policy is under review, with follow-up to be undertaken. • Councillors were encouraged to review Ofsted-related notes shared from the session. • An Equality Policy is due to go to Board in July. Members noted the update. Relevant materials will be shared via GovernorHub/The Key.	
4.2	Councillors were informed that this would be Stef's final Academy Council meeting, as she will be leaving the Academy Council. The Chair thanked Stef for her valuable contribution, and councillors expressed their appreciation for her work.	
4.3	It was noted that a potential sponsor councillor has been approached.	
4.4	Following Stef's departure, councillors discussed arrangements for link roles. It was noted that the Disadvantaged link role, previously held by Stef, will need to be reassigned. Eva will take on the Teaching and Learning link role. Chris confirmed he will continue as link councillor for Health and Safety. **ACTION:** To include the assignment of a Link Councillor for Disadvantaged pupils on the agenda for the next meeting.	**TC**
5	Academy Council Report:	
	The Academy Council report had been uploaded to Governor Hub prior to the meeting and was noted by councillors.	

5.1	**Quality of Education including curriculum developments**	
5.1.1	Information was included within the Academy Council report; apart from the question below, no further questions were raised.	
5.1.2	**Q: In terms of parental engagement and community perception, there appears to be some negative commentary locally. It was suggested that the school website and Trust communications do not consistently highlight positive news (e.g. limited recent updates), and that more frequent celebration of successes (sporting events, trips, curriculum achievements, etc.) could help improve engagement and parental confidence. Is there an opportunity to strengthen this?** The Principal noted surprise at the level of perceived negative feedback and was not previously aware of this being a concern. It was confirmed that updating social media and website content currently relies on limited capacity and contributions from staff (including ensuring appropriate permissions for images). Members noted that some perceptions may be historical, but that this remains important. Positive examples (e.g. newsletters and specific events) were acknowledged, although it was felt that more consistent sharing of successes could further improve engagement. It was agreed that the school may be missing opportunities to promote positive activity more regularly. **ACTION:** School to explore increasing the frequency of positive communications (including social media and website updates) to celebrate student success and wider school activity. **ACTION:** Liaise with the Trust communications team to agree the most effective approach.	**JE** **JE**
5.2	**Attendance**	
5.2.1	The Principal reported that attendance remains a concern and has declined slightly overall. While communication with families continues, including daily messaging for Years 9 and 10, these year groups remain a particular area of focus. It was noted that, excluding Year 11 in Term 6, attendance for Years 9 and 10 has been approximately 81%, which the Principal identified as a concern. The Council heard that, despite low attendance levels, Year 10 pupils made a strong start to their mock examinations, demonstrating that engagement can improve when expectations are clear. The Principal emphasised that improving attendance for Years 9 and 10 remains a priority.	
5.2.2	**Q: Is persistent absence reducing?** The Principal confirmed that persistent absence had reduced previously but has since increased again. The academy is exploring the use of penalty notices;	

	however, it was noted that these are not always consistently enforced by the local authority.	
5.2.3	**Q: Are tutors involved in promoting attendance?** The Principal advised that tutors are expected to reinforce the importance of attendance across year groups, although there is a need to streamline this approach. He emphasised the importance of balancing expectations carefully, ensuring that pupils are supported rather than feeling singled out. A continued focus is being placed on positive routines, including welcoming and greeting pupils. The Principal further noted that additional time has been built into the end of the school day to support wider pastoral priorities, with attendance forming a key strand within this work. The Council was informed that the academy is exploring additional capacity to support attendance improvement, within existing budget arrangements. The Principal expressed his intention for this post to be in place by September.	
5.3	**Quality of teaching and learning – with reference to curriculum**	
5.3.1	As outlined in the Academy Council report, The principal reported that, in preparation for Ofsted, increased support is being provided to middle and senior leaders to ensure clarity of expectations. This includes strengthening accountability through lesson observations, line management discussions, and a focus on the progress of key groups, including disadvantaged pupils. The Executive Principal has also worked with middle leaders to ensure they are effectively prepared for inspection. This is recognised as an ongoing area of development. Current focus areas include the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science, alongside additional work undertaken within Humanities.	
5.4	**Behaviour and Exclusions**	
5.4.1	The Principal reported that the most significant current behavioural concern is internal truancy. He noted that, overall, the cohort remains positive, describing pupils as “great kids as ever,” but acknowledged that internal truancy continues to present challenge. Suspension data indicates a reduction compared with previous terms, which aligns with the intended direction of travel. The Principal explained that, in Term 2, the introduction of after-school detentions contributed to a reduction in suspensions. While figures remain slightly higher than at the same point last year, they are continuing to decrease. It was further noted that the average number of days lost through suspension, as reflected in the “black box” data within the report, remains slightly below the trust average. The Principal added that a number of five-day suspensions have been issued for a small group of complex pupils, not solely in response to individual incidents but as part of a pattern of repeated behaviours. These suspensions are also being used to enable engagement with external professionals, including the local authority and other headteachers, in order to seek advice and support.	

	The Council noted the data provided within the report, which demonstrated that suspension numbers remain slightly above last year at this point, although the number of days lost has reduced and remains below the trust average.	
5.4.2	**Are there pupils at risk of permanent exclusion?** The Principal confirmed that a small number of pupils remain a concern. Appropriate support and intervention are in place, and the academy continues to work closely with families and external agencies to meet pupils' needs.	
5.4.3	Councillors raised ongoing concerns regarding internal truancy, noting that this has been a persistent issue without significant improvement. **Q: Given that internal truancy has been a long-standing concern, is there anything further that could be done?** The Principal advised that this is a pattern seen more widely across the trust and reflects a national trend. The Executive Principal added that there is strong evidence linking internal truancy to unmet needs, particularly in relation to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), and that work is ongoing to strengthen support in this area. The Principal highlighted the planned deployment of wellbeing staff, with a focus on ensuring pupils are supported to cross the threshold into lessons. He also noted that there is work to be undertaken with staff to ensure that pupils arriving late to lessons are consistently welcomed and supported, rather than discouraged.	
5.4.4	**Q: What does this look like in practice?** The Academy Council discussed strategies to address internal truancy, including ensuring pupils are welcomed positively into lessons. The Principal confirmed expectations have been reinforced with staff and that this remains an ongoing focus.	
5.4.5	**Q: How is this being managed?** The Principal confirmed that this has been addressed directly with staff. When asked whether staff are understanding and responding appropriately, he advised that this is mixed; the majority of staff respond well and reflect on feedback, but there remain some inconsistencies. He emphasised that this is an ongoing focus for leadership. In discussion, it was noted that some concerns have involved both permanent and temporary staff, including a recent incident involving a cover teaching assistant. The Principal acknowledged the pressures on staff but reiterated the expectation that professional standards must be maintained.	
5.4.6	Returning to internal truancy, the Principal explained that some pupils continue to refuse to attend lessons despite sanctions such as suspension, which are not always effective in changing behaviour. As a result, the academy is exploring the deployment of staff to physically support pupils into lessons. He noted that each case presents different needs, which require careful analysis and tailored responses. The Council was informed of practical measures being introduced, including the installation of shutters on toilet areas to reduce avoidance behaviours. While the shutters are now installed, logistical arrangements for their use are still being finalised, including access and key provision. The intention is that	

	toilets will be closed during lesson times, with a designated facility remaining open, in order to reduce opportunities for pupils to avoid lessons.	
5.4.7	**Q: What will replace Class Charts, and will there continue to be a rewards-based incentive system?** The principal advised that the academy is planning to move to a new system, with My Child at School (MCAS) via Bromcom identified as the long-term solution. However, the principal confirmed that the academy is not yet in a position to implement this effectively by September. As a result, Class Charts will remain in place throughout the next academic year to allow sufficient time for the new system to be fully developed, tested, and embedded. The Executive Principal noted that Bromcom has the functionality to support everything without the need for additional paid systems, and the intention is to move towards a single, unified platform. The principal emphasised the importance of ensuring the new system is implemented effectively rather than introducing changes prematurely.	
5.4.8	**Q: In light of updated government guidance and ongoing national discussion, what is the academy's current position on mobile device use, and are there plans to strengthen the policy? Is a trust-wide approach, such as the use of pouches or device hand-in systems, being considered?** The Principal advised that current guidance remains that mobile phones should not be accessible during the school day. While most pupils comply, a small minority do not, and this is impacting the perceived effectiveness of the policy. The Principal and Executive Principal confirmed that this is under active review at both academy and trust level. Options such as pouch systems have been considered; however, these present significant cost and logistical challenges and may not address non-compliance for all pupils. It was noted that there is insufficient time to implement any major changes for September. The current policy will therefore remain in place, with further work planned during Term 1 to review options in light of updated guidance, legal advice and feasibility. No final decision has yet been made. **ACTION:** Principal to provide an update on the academy's mobile device policy, including any trust-wide direction, at the Term 2 meeting.	**JE**
5.4.9	**Q: Parent survey – positive behaviour has improved, which is encouraging. However, responses to "my child feels safe and happy at school" have declined slightly.** The Principal explained that the format of the survey has changed since the previous iteration. Previously there were fewer response options, whereas the current survey includes a wider range (including neutral responses such as "don't know" / "neither agree nor disagree"), making direct comparison difficult. Overall, outcomes are improved but not yet where the school would	

	want them to be. The survey received 140 responses, providing a useful overview. The survey also included feedback on the school day, which showed overwhelming support for a slight adjustment. As a result, the school day will end at 3:10pm (previously 3:20pm), with minor reductions to lesson time and adjustments to bus routes. In addition, responses relating to mobile phones indicated strong support for restrictions, including students having "brick phones". This will be retained as supporting evidence for the school's approach. Positive feedback on school communication was also noted.	
5.4.10	**Q: Is there still a focus on maintaining consistent uniform standards, given observations within the local community suggesting inconsistency (e.g. students not meeting expected dress standards)?** It was confirmed that clear expectations are in place and that uniform standards are challenged by staff, including senior leaders. Tutors play a key front-line role in reinforcing expectations, although it was acknowledged that challenge may not always be applied consistently. The school holds spare uniform to support students where needed, and not all items (e.g. leggings) form part of the uniform policy. Members noted that there are no simple solutions, but that maintaining consistent standards remains an ongoing focus.	
5.5	**Pupil Premium and LAC**	
5.5.1	Information was included within the Academy Council report; no further questions were raised.	
5.6	**Staffing**	
5.6.1	The Academy Council received an update regarding SENCo capacity and recruitment arrangements.	
5.6.2	Recruitment for a SENCo has been undertaken; however, the field was limited and no successful candidate is able to start before January. This remains an ongoing concern. Alternative support options, including Trust support, have been explored but are currently limited.	
5.6.3	Will there be sufficient capacity to fulfil the SENCo role, particularly given additional EHCPs expected?	
5.6.4	It was acknowledged that capacity is a concern, particularly with an anticipated increase in EHCPs. Interim arrangements are in place, although this remains an area of risk.	
5.6.5	It was noted that the SENCo role is being considered in terms of capacity and focus, with an emphasis on intervention and one-to-one support, rather than a broader leadership (e.g. Associate Assistant Principal) function.	
5.6.6	The timetable is nearing completion and will be shared with staff.	
5.6.7	**Q: Staff absence – concerns were raised that the same staff may be absent frequently. In relation to parent survey feedback, how is the school**	

	addressing staff absence, particularly where pupils report having multiple cover teachers? The Principal advised that managing absence at an individual level can be complex. Overall, occasional sickness absence is lower than last year; however, there remain some cases of long-term absence. These are being actively managed, including through phased returns where appropriate. Staff absence and its impact on pupils is discussed regularly with staff. The school has also shared absence data with staff, including the total number of days missed last year, which initially led to improved absence levels, although this has since increased slightly. Each absence is reviewed, particularly where patterns emerge.	
5.6.8	**Q: Are return-to-work meetings taking place, and who is responsible for these?** Return-to-work meetings are the responsibility of line managers. The Principal indicated that these are expected to be taking place, although could not confirm this in all cases.	
5.6.9	**Q: Where there are repeated short-term absences, are these being escalated?** It was confirmed that patterns of absence are monitored and followed up. The school is working towards improving systems and consistency in how absence is managed.	
5.6.10	**Q: Is the Trust HR team being utilised to support absence management?** The Principal confirmed that the school engages regularly with the Trust HR team (approximately 3–4 times per week), including support from an assigned Employee Relations link. This includes ongoing discussions regarding staff absence.	
5.7	**Academy Improvement Plan (AIP)**	
5.7.1	Members noted that they had been invited to attend a recent SLT meeting where the AIP was RAG-rated. It was suggested that this would be a useful process to repeat on a termly basis to support Academy Council oversight. **ACTION:** To incorporate termly review of the AIP with SLT.	**JE**
5.7.2	It was noted that there has been limited opportunity for the Academy Council to review AIP progress across Terms 1–4 to date.	
5.7.3	Discussion acknowledged the significant operational demands on SLT, including day-to-day management and capacity pressures, which impact time available for strategic work.	
5.7.4	It was confirmed that the ARV document will be re-uploaded to Governor Hub.	
6	Safeguarding	
6.1	The Academy Council received a safeguarding update and discussed safeguarding monitoring, training and compliance arrangements. Members were assured that appropriate actions are being taken where required and	

	that safeguarding remains a key priority for the academy. Full safeguarding discussions are recorded within the full meeting minutes.	
7	Equality and Diversity	
7.1	The Academy Council discussed equality and diversity in relation to recruitment. It was noted that the recruitment policy is clear, and that interview panels are selected based on appropriate skills and experience.	
7.2	An update was provided on EDI activity. It was noted that this is reviewed annually, with targets in place, including increasing representation from the global majority workforce. Members noted that achieving this is dependent on the applicant pool, and that geographical context may impact recruitment opportunities compared to other areas such as Bristol.	
7.3	The principal shared that Doug Yeind has provided anti-racism resources, which will be used with students as appropriate. It was noted that a separate Student Voice report will further inform this area of work.	
8	Student Voice (Term 3 follow-up)	
8.1	A Student Voice report on Personal Development was shared on GovernorHub prior to the meeting and noted by members.	
8.2	A summary of findings from the Student Voice document was noted by the Academy Council. Feedback from 240 students indicates that the Personal Development curriculum is viewed positively overall, although engagement remains an area for development. Students generally reported feeling safe in lessons, with some areas identified for further development, including Mental Health. Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) was noted as a stronger area within the curriculum. Opportunities to strengthen delivery, engagement and clarity of content were highlighted.	
8.3	Proposed next steps arising from Student Voice feedback were noted as: • Review and revise the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) curriculum • Redesign the Mental Health curriculum strand • Review and update the Culture curriculum strand • Strengthen quality assurance processes	
9	Policies that require review	
9.1	The following policies were noted and/or approved via GovernorHub: • Positive Handling Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • Complaints Policy	
9.2	**Q: Have fire risk assessments been reviewed?** It was confirmed that fire risk assessments have been reviewed. The central Trust team has undertaken assessments, including inspection of roof spaces.	
10	Link reports	
10.1	**SEND Link Report** Eva to upload the SEND link report to Governor Hub. It was noted that the review referenced the position from three years ago, and that significant progress has been made against previously identified actions. The Academy Council expressed thanks to Karen for her work and noted her forthcoming departure. Members discussed: • ongoing concerns regarding staffing capacity within SEND	

	• SEND attendance remaining an area of concern • Concern regarding reading support and provision for SEND pupils • the need for clarity around SEMH triage between the SEND and pastoral teams Concern was raised regarding the absence of a SENCo and the potential impact; however, it was hoped that appropriate arrangements would mitigate risk. Positive progress for SEND students was noted, with improvements observed and feedback indicating a more positive experience.	
10.2	**PTA Link Feedback** Laura reported that planning is underway for upcoming events, including Summer Sound and Year 6 transition activities. The PTA was recognised for the positive work undertaken, including welcoming new members. Increased efforts are planned to further promote engagement with parents.	
10.3	Additional Link Activity • Laura to arrange a careers visit • Stuart and Colin to meet to discuss wellbeing • A wellbeing meeting is scheduled for the following week, to be led by Jenny, to establish a baseline position	
10.4	Due to time constraints, link visit reports were not discussed in detail. Members were asked to review reports on Governor Hub.	
11	Matter for the attention of the Board/COAC	
11.1	No matter for the attention of the Board/COAC	
12	Any other buisness	
12.1	The following upcoming events were noted: • Achievement Evening at the church on 9 July • "Summer of Sound" musical festival on 10 July • Participation in the CLF Battle of the Bands on 15 July	
13	Date of Next Meeting	
13.1	TBC	

Meeting closed at 20:12

ACTIONS

3.2	JE to circulate ARV feedback to councillors as soon as possible.	JE
3.2	CM and SS to meet to discuss staff well-being priorities and report back - Carried forward.	CM & SS
4.4	To include the assignment of a Link Councillor for Disadvantaged pupils on the agenda for the next meeting.	TC
5.1.2	School to explore increasing the frequency of positive communications (including social media and website updates) to celebrate student success and wider school activity.	JE
5.1.2	Liaise with the Trust communications team to agree the most effective approach	JE
5.4.8	Principal to provide an update on the academy's mobile device policy, including any trust-wide direction, at the Term 2 meeting.	JE

5.7.1	To incorporate termly review of the AIP with SLT.	JE