

Minutes – The Sky Academy Council Meeting

Version: Draft
Meeting Date: Monday, 6 October 2025
Location: Online
Time: 15:00 – 17:00PM

Chair:

Attendees: Kate East Sponsor Councillor
 Amanda Wright Sponsor Councillor
 Emma Wykes Support Staff Councillor
 Kai Francis Staff Councillor

In attendance: Tracy French Executive Principal
 Gaby Long Principal
 Becky Lambert Vice Principal
 Fiona Barnes Assistant Principal
 Tessa Clark Clerk

Apologies:

Minutes

		Action
1	Introduction, Administration and Apologies	
1.1	Attendees were welcomed.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest made.	
3	Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising	
3.1	The minutes of the last meeting were approved.	
3.2	Updates on actions from the previous meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.2 EW shared that JC will consider taking on the Sponsor Councillor role. EW will follow up with a phone call. • 4.3 EW has looked into EduGov access with HR but was unable to locate the account previously used at Sky. This is still being investigated with HR and will be carried forward to the next meeting. • 8.3.1 TF was to progress the issue with the drains and CCTV. It was confirmed that the drains have now been resolved. The CCTV issue 	

	<p>has been raised and is progressing. TF has added it to the risk register. EW confirmed that a reserves bid has been prepared and submitted for the full amount. Although initially declined due to funding constraints, approval has since been given to use reserves. They are now exploring any additional funding sources, with a view to delivering the project in stages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.1 TF was to find out what disability related information academies are legally permitted to access for staff. This action will be carried forward to the next meeting. <p>ACTION: EW to call JC regarding the sponsor councillor role. ACTION: EW to continue investigating EduGov access with HR. ACTION: TF to find out what disability-related information academies are legally permitted to access for staff.</p>	EW EW TF
4	Chairs update	
4.1	As of today's date, the vacancies are: 1 parents councillor and 3 Sponsor Councillors.	
5	Election for Vice Chair	
5.1	<p>Chair and Vice Chair Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair: Kate East (KE) Vice Chair/ Backup: Amanda (to cover during KE's absence in January) 	
6	Appoint/ confirm link roles	
6.1	<p>Link Roles Confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding: KE SEND: KE (interim) Careers: RJ (new councillor) Disadvantaged: KE (interim) Wellbeing: AW 	
7	Training	
7.1	All councillors present have completed their mandatory Safeguarding and Governance Essentials training.	
8	Academy Council report	
8.1	All members confirmed they had read the updated Academy Council report on Governor Hub.	
8.2	Results Review	
8.2.1	How pleased are you with the results?	
8.2.2	<p>General Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GL responded, acknowledging that while the team always stives for better outcomes, there has been clear progress. Students are leaving with a greater volume of qualifications, which supports their transition to college. The team remains ambitious, aiming to improve outcomes further. 	
8.2.3	<p>Subject specific notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art: Outcomes were disappointing. The moderation report did not align with expectations, and internal review is underway with support from Laura Marley to improve feedback and future results. English: The absence of English lead may have impacted GCSE outcomes. Their involvement could have secured better results. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maths: Two students did not achieve a maths qualification. This is being investigated to understand the reasons and improve support. 	
8.2.4	A new three-strand curriculum has been introduced to better align students with appropriate qualification pathways and improve outcomes.	
8.2.5	Positive developments in securing diverse and relevant college placements for students. Notably, some students gained access to courses beyond the typical foundation learning pathways, including placements at institutions like Yeovil College, which traditionally have limited intake from the school.	
8.2.6	Q: Have any exam paper been submitted for remarking?	
8.2.7	A: GL confirmed that very few remarks were made. Borderline cases were reviewed, but most students were significantly below the grade boundary—typically by around 20 marks. She acknowledged the importance of reassessing students closer to the boundary and noted that qualification changes were being considered.	
8.2.8	BL explained that CLF special schools are aligning to use the same exam boards, primarily AQA, to streamline assessment and mock schedules. This will support better resource sharing, including question-level analysis, and enable moderation across schools.	
8.2.9	KE asked whether different exam boards were used across subjects.	
8.2.10	BL confirmed that AQA is used throughout, with biology as the exception (Edexcel). She noted the accessibility of AQA papers, especially in maths, and the benefits of collaboration with other schools, including support from Snowdon Village.	
8.2.11	KE praised the availability of tools like AQA's mock paper generator and question analysis features, supporting the move to a single exam board. BL added that all boards follow the national curriculum, with differences mainly in exam question style.	
8.2.12	Q: Are exam boards listed on the school website?	
8.2.13	A: They are deliberately omitted to allow flexibility in future decisions.	
8.2.14	Q: Is combined science offered?	
8.2.15	A: BL confirmed that only biology is offered this year due to staffing and timetable constraints. She noted that science is now a GCSE marker in the curriculum and remains under review.	
8.2.16	KE raised concerns about the heavy content in biology and the challenge of completing the syllabus within limited lesson time. BL explained that the decision was teacher-led based on expertise and confirmed openness to review.	
8.2.17	<p>TF suggested consulting with Will Davis from the central science team to review the curriculum plan and proposed linking this review with an upcoming half-day session to observe planning and teaching delivery.</p> <p>ACTION: BL to contact Will Davis (central science team) to review the biology curriculum plan and assess its deliverability.</p>	BL
8.2.18	KE raised a question about value added, noting that the data presented focused on attainment without showing whether outcomes reflected strong progress for individual students. BL explained that while SATs data was unavailable for the current Year 11 cohort, internal data such as CATs and reading assessments had been used to build a more detailed picture. This analysis is helping to inform pathway and qualification decisions.	
8.2.19	BL confirmed that the school is currently focusing on current Year 11 and below, and that richer data sets are being developed. Work is underway to map flight	

	paths from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, particularly in English and maths, identifying gaps and setting realistic progress expectations.	
8.2.20	KE highlighted that under the new Ofsted framework, schools will be expected to demonstrate pupil-level progress and understanding. She recommended prioritising Key Stage 4 so students can articulate their targets and progress confidently.	
8.2.21	TF added that students are increasingly aware of their pathways and are keen to understand how they can progress, which supports the need for clear communication and tracking.	
8.3	Safeguarding including link role + Termly report	
8.3.1	TF raised recent safeguarding concerns, particularly around students absconding from the site.	
8.3.2	<p>KF reported that changes to morning routines have significantly improved site safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are now present earlier, with some on site from 8:15am and others by 8:40am. • Radios are used during morning transitions to improve communication and supervision. • A new logbook has been introduced to record the time and reason for any student leaving the site, separate from the standard tick sheet. <p>A meeting with the local authority is being arranged to address issues with early student drop-offs before staff are officially on duty.</p>	
8.3.3	The AC also discussed the ongoing issue of students who remain inappropriately placed due to delays in securing alternative educational provision. Two students, were highlighted as examples of long-term cases where appropriate placements have not been secured since Year 7 and 8. These students are now in Year 11 and have made limited progress. The local authority has acknowledged these systemic issues. In response, the school has trialed a new initiative in which a member of the pastoral team is allocated two hours each day to collect students who are refusing to attend. This has led to a 4% increase in attendance, although the sustainability of this approach is under review.	
8.3.4	A serious safeguarding incident involving child-on-child abuse was also discussed. Although the police investigation concluded without substantiating the allegations, the school took immediate action by implementing one-to-one support for the student involved. North Somerset Council has agreed to fund this provision until Christmas. An AIM (Assessment, Intervention, Moving on) assessment has been initiated and is expected to be completed within six to eight weeks. The student is not in contact with the alleged victim and is being closely monitored. As a Looked After Child, the student is also subject to additional professional oversight.	
8.3.5	<p>KE, in her role as safeguarding link councillor, requested that anonymised examples of risk assessments be shared at the next meeting to support her oversight responsibilities. This was agreed, and Kai confirmed he would provide two contrasting examples for review.</p> <p>ACTION: KF to provide anonymised risk assessments for review at the next meeting.</p>	KF
8.3.6	EW and FB confirmed that they would be reviewing and updating the safeguarding policy to ensure it aligns with a trauma-informed approach, once the updated trust-wide policy is released. In the interim, Emma will ensure that	

	<p>the current safeguarding policy reflects the latest <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> (KCSIE) guidance and includes a clear review date.</p> <p>ACTION: EW and FB to update the safeguarding policy with a trauma-informed approach once the trust-wise version is released.</p> <p>ACTION: EW to ensure the current safeguarding policy includes KCSIE updates and a clear review date.</p>	<p>EW & FB</p> <p>EW</p>
8.3.7	<p>EW also outlined the process for reviewing the Single Central Record (SCR), noting that an annual audit is conducted by the HR team. KF and GL also review the SCR internally. With KE now confirmed as Chair, EW will arrange a meeting with her to review the SCR and the risk register in detail.</p> <p>ACTION: EW to arrange a meeting with KE to review the SCR and risk register.</p>	EW
8.4	Risk Register	
8.4.1	<p>EW confirmed the top five risks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCTV – progressing in stages with funding from reserves and other sources. 2. Rodents – largely resolved with a new contractor and site works. 3. Fire Stopping – under investigation by Estates team. 4. Drains – mostly resolved; further issues identified near the new build. 5. Classroom Presentation – significant improvements noted. 	
8.5	Staffing and Wellbeing	
8.5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GL reported on staffing challenges, including four long-term absences due to health and personal issues. • HR support has been strong, with weekly meetings and use of the Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health. • One HLTA is struggling with the teaching element of their role; alternative options are being explored. • The school has developed two wellbeing rooms and a dedicated PPA space to support staff. • AW, as the new Wellbeing Link Councillor, will meet with the team to review these initiatives. 	
9	Agenda Planning for year	
9.1	Agreed to align future meetings with the CLF Top Sheet and SEF/AIP focus areas.	
9.1.1	<p>Meeting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC2 (8 December): Ofsted Readiness • AC3: Disadvantaged • AC 4: Investing in People • AC5: Partnerships <p>ACTION: GL to share the Top Sheet, AIP, and SEF ahead of the next meeting.</p>	GL
10	Policies that require review	
10.1	<p>All Academy Councillors have agreed to adopt the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety Arrangements 25-26 • Health & Safety Policy 25-26 • Admissions and Arrangements Policy 25-26 • Anti-Bullying & Hate Crime Policy 25-26 • Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy 25-26 • Curriculum Statement & Policy 25-26 • EDI Statement to Publication 25-26 • Exams and Accreditations Policy 25-26 • Lockdown Guidance 25-26 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone Working Procedure and Guidance 25-26 • Relationships for Learning & Behaviour Policy 25-26 • SEND Policy 25-26 • SEND Report 25-26 	
11	Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC	
11.1	There were no matters for the attention of the Board.	
12	Any Other Business	
12.1	TC shared a request for councillors to support the Admissions Committee, which meets on Fridays via Teams. KE offered to be listed as a potential attendee, depending on availability.	
13	Date of Next Meeting	
13.1	Monday, 8 th December 2025	

ACTIONS

3.2	ACTION: EW to call JC regarding the sponsor councillor role.	EW
3.2	ACTION: EW to continue investigating EduGov access with HR.	EW
3.2	ACTION: TF to find out what disability-related information academies are legally permitted to access for staff.	TF
8.2.17	ACTION: BL to contact Will Davis (central science team) to review the biology curriculum plan and assess its deliverability.	BL
8.3.5	ACTION: KF to provide anonymised risk assessments for review at the next meeting.	KF
8.3.6	ACTION: EW and FB to update the safeguarding policy with a trauma-informed approach once the trust-wise version is released.	EW & FB
8.3.6	ACTION: EW to ensure the current safeguarding policy includes KCSIE updates and a clear review date.	EW
8.3.7	ACTION: EW to arrange a meeting with KE to review the SCR and risk register.	EW
9.1.1	ACTION: GL to share the Top Sheet, AIP, and SEF ahead of the next meeting.	GL