

Minutes – Priorswood Primary School Academy Council Meeting

Version: Approved
Meeting Date: 15/07/2025
Location: Priorswood Primary School
Time: 14:00 – 16:00

Chair: Sapphire Lynch Sponsor Councillor
Attendees: Lucy Davis Staff Councillor
 Robin Clempson Sponsor Councillor
 Cherry Hingston Parent Councillor

In attendance: Carly Ellis Principal
 Tracy French Executive Principal
 Tessa Clark Clerk

Apologies: Daniel Sumner Staff Councillor

Minutes

		Action
1	Introduction, Administration and Apologies	
1.1	The chair opened the meeting at 14:05 and welcomed everyone.	
1.2	Apologies as above.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest made.	
3	Academy Council Membership	
3.1	The chair shared that RG has been removed. The chair has written to him, but hasn't had a response.	
3.2	As of today's date, the vacancies are: 1 parent councillor and 3 sponsor councillors.	
3.3	CH has offered to put up posters over the summer to recruit potential Academy Councillors. ACTION: TC to contact marketing team to see if they can make the generic governor's poster specific to Priorswood.	
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the last meeting were approved.	
5	Matters Arising	

5.1	<p>Item 3.2 – Website Update The website is now live but remains incomplete. Staff bios are not yet uploaded. ACTION: ACs to write their bios and send to CJ (Ops Manager).</p>	
5.2	<p>Item 9.1.3 – In-House Staff Survey (Edurio Feedback) CE created and distributed an internal staff survey, focusing on the ten weakest response areas from the CLF-wide Edurio survey. Results were appended to the AC report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 of 25 staff have completed the survey. • It was noted that this year’s substantial changes (joining CLF, curriculum updates, new expectations) warrant review of the survey results again next year. CE will continue distributing surveys biannually. 	
5.3	<p>Item 9.5 – Receptionist Introduction CE shared a Dojo post introducing the new receptionist.</p>	
5.4	<p>Item 11.1.1 – Handbook and Framework CE reported that the handbook is still being finalised and will be shared once ready. The Teaching and Learning Framework is in development; blurb completed and criteria selected</p>	
5.5	<p>Item 11.2 – SEN Link Role Visit CH met with SF (SENCO) and shared the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Accessibility Plan requires review, as this occurs every two years. • SF works 3 days/week due to historical arrangements. TF noted the general benchmark is 1 day per 100 pupils. • SF is assessing new nursery entrants ahead of September. Earlier identification and an “assess, plan, do, review” cycle are necessary to support potential funding applications. • Uploading SEN documentation is time-consuming. CH suggested delegated admin support. CE offered overtime to TAs, but there has been no interest. CH submitted the SEN Link Role Report to Gov Hub. 	
5.6	<p>Item 11.2.1 – Lockdown Policy Review CE confirmed the lockdown policy has been reviewed and circulated. Although there is no key to access the church hall (designated lockdown location), staff can still enter via a contact number. SL asked about the Business Continuity Plan; CE confirmed that one is in place.</p>	
6	Achievement and Standards	
6.1	<p>The principal shared the report on Gov Hub prior to the meeting. SATs results were included in the report.</p>	
6.2	<p>SATs results as follows: Reading: 60% (PP: 23%) Writing: 60% (PP: 23%) Mathematics: 48% (PP: 31%) Combined: 44% (PP: 25%)</p>	
6.2.1	<p>The Principal shared this year’s SATs results, noting mixed outcomes. Maths, historically strong, was unexpectedly lower—some pupils who performed well in mocks underachieved in the final exam, particularly on one reasoning paper. Only one pupil missed test day but completed within the official window.</p>	

6.2.2	The cohort faced multiple leadership changes throughout their primary journey; several pupils who didn't meet SATs thresholds still demonstrated expected standards based on internal evidence.	
6.2.3	The school is reflecting on test conditions, acknowledging small differences between mock and actual exam environments—such as formal introductions and parental attitudes towards SATs may have influenced pupil mindset.	
6.2.4	Positively, projections for the next two years are strong, credited to increased stability and improvements under the “Priorswood Way.”	
6.2.5	Moderation outcomes were encouraging, with external Year 6 and internal Years 3 and 5 reviews recognising clear progress.	
6.2.6	One Year 6 pupil achieved greater depth in writing, with a Year 5 pupil recently confirmed at the same level—despite the extremely high standard required.	
6.2.7	Several pupils exceeded expectations, including one previously considered borderline.	
6.3	<p>Phonics:</p> <p>Phonics outcomes in Year 1 were impacted by pupil mobility and staffing changes. Although initial projections indicated a 75% pass rate, final results were 68%, with 60% of Pupil Premium pupils achieving the expected standard. Mobility was identified as the primary challenge, with several pupils leaving and two new starters joining who had to begin phonics from scratch. The class also had three different teachers across the year, adding to the disruption. The national average last year was 80%.</p> <p>In contrast, Reception showed significant progress using the <i>Unlocking Letters and Sounds</i> scheme compared to the previous year's approach. Pupils are now entering Year 1 at a stronger starting point, having advanced further in their phonics journey—highlighting the scheme's positive impact.</p> <p>EHCP pupils made exceptional progress with phonics this year. For them individually, the outcomes represent a major achievement and reflect the success of targeted support strategies.</p>	
6.3.1	Does EAL make a difference to phonics outcomes?	
6.3.2	Not if pupils begin in Reception—they receive full phonics instruction. However, those who start in Year 1 miss key foundational skills	
6.3.3	What support exists for parents, especially with phonics misconceptions?	
6.3.4	Suggestions included offering open sessions or recorded materials for home support. The class teacher previously shared resources via Class Dojo and plans to do so again.	
6.3.5	Is there intervention for pupils who didn't pass?	
6.3.6	Yes. Pupils continue with phonics in the first term, covering spelling rules before transitioning to guided reading. Interventions run across the whole year.	
6.4	<p>Multiplication Tables Check (Year 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 4 MTC results show significant progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All pupils: increased from an average score of 15.3 in 2023/24 to 21.3 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pupil Premium (PP): improved from 12.4 to 19.8 • This cohort began with <i>Ashley Down</i> in September, while the upcoming cohort started with the programme from Year 3, indicating stronger foundations and sustained improvement moving forward. • Overall, the data reflects positive direction and effective implementation of times tables teaching strategies 	
7	Safeguarding	
7.1	<p>Safeguarding Link Visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SL's meeting with SK (Safeguarding and Pastoral Lead) was postponed and took place on the morning of the Academy Council meeting. The conversation was constructive, with SK noting that safeguarding is well integrated and operates effectively across the team. • The CLF audit conducted in January gave a 38% outcome. An action plan is now in place, with most targets expected to be met by September. SK expressed confidence that results will improve before the next audit in January, supported by stronger data. • CPOMS categories have been updated, requiring staff to tag concerns correctly. SK is actively guiding colleagues to use the appropriate categories. Staff are responding well and proactively reporting concerns directly. • Some July actions remain incomplete due to SK accompanying three school trips, particularly supporting the Year 6 cohort where needs were high. A fourth adult was required on the London trip, prompting discussion about trip planning and the need to balance safeguarding workload and availability across SLT. • The Principal confirmed these demands were specific to this cohort and unlikely to be repeated. A contract for parents attending trips has now been introduced to ensure clarity and consistency. • SL's report was delayed due to scheduling challenges while SK was offsite, but feedback highlighted SK strong contribution to attendance and safeguarding strategy over the past year. • SK found having a Link Councillor beneficial and looks forward to continuing this collaboration. She has made a notable impact since joining the school. 	
8	Finance, Health & Safety and Estates	
8.1	Do you have any health and safety data?	
8.1.1	No RIDDOR-reportable accidents have occurred; however, there has been an increase in minor incidents during lunch and break times, mostly involving children bumping into each other.	
8.1.2	All incidents are being recorded, though data has not yet been compiled in report format. ACTION: Health & Safety data to be included in future reports	
8.1.3	New gym equipment has been installed. While some children are using it incorrectly, adult supervision is consistently in place.	
8.2	A Fire Risk Assessment was carried out on 1st July 2025, with an overall rating of medium .	
9	Governance	
9.1	The Chair informed councillors of a strategic meeting scheduled for September. This will include a presentation from either Steve Taylor or Sally	

	Apps outlining Trust targets, followed by individual academy council sessions focused on identifying "bright spots" and areas for trial or development.	
9.1.1	Councillors are asked to consider which successes and challenges they would like to raise, potentially linking to the Edurio survey data.	
9.1.2	The Chair advised that councillors should review the updated Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) and Academy Improvement Plan ahead of the September meeting to ensure everyone is fully informed. ACTION: CE to upload the updated SEF and AIP to Gov Hub at the beginning of September.	
9.2	Councillors were invited to volunteer for upcoming PEX (Pupil Exclusion) panels.	
10	Equality and Diversity	
10.1	The school has engaged with EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) networks, and while the Principal has joined some herself, EDI is being led by Laura, who is reviewing the whole curriculum ahead of next academic year.	
10.2	Across year groups, high-quality texts with diverse cultural references are being embedded. For example, Year 2 pupils study Milana the Pencil as part of inclusive literature work. Efforts are ongoing to ensure each year group's book selection reflects a range of backgrounds and lived experiences.	
11	Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC	
11.1	<p>A parent councillor shared feedback from a recent school trip, raising concerns about the nutritional quality of packed lunches and the appeal of cooked meals. Some children are choosing packed lunches instead of school meals, which may impact their overall behaviour and energy levels.</p> <p>The Principal confirmed various initiatives to promote healthy eating, including messages on Class Dojo and themed weeks covering science and nutrition.</p> <p>The current catering provider, Aspens, is under Trust-wide contract and offers two menu options: <i>A</i> (traditional) and <i>B</i> (culturally diverse). The Principal continues to give feedback to the kitchen team, and adjustments have been made based on her input.</p> <p>Questions were raised about the policy on packed lunch contents. The school does not enforce strict bans but instead encourages positive conversations with pupils about their choices. Misunderstandings occasionally arise when children relay messages to parents.</p> <p>Funding for free school meals is based on daily uptake, not weekly entitlement. This means the school only receives funding for the specific days a child chooses a school meal.</p> <p>ACTION: Remind new parents in September of expectations around packed lunches and encourage healthy meal choices.</p>	
12	Any Other Business	
12.1	No other business.	
13	Date of Next Meeting	
13.1	Strategic meeting – Wednesday 24 th September AC1 – Tuesday 16 th September	

ACTIONS

3.3	ACTION: TC to contact marketing team to see if they can make the generic governor's poster specific to Priorswood.	TC
5.1	ACTION: ACs to write their bios and send to CJ (Ops Manger).	ALL
8.1.2	ACTION: Health & Safety data to be included in future reports.	CE
9.1.2	ACTION: CE to upload the updated SEF and AIP to Gov Hub at the beginning of September.	CE
11.1	ACTION: Remind new parents in September of expectations around packed lunches and encourage healthy meal choices.	CE