

**Beech Academy Council**  
**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 10.30 am**  
**Via Teams**  
**Continuation of meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

<b>Those Present:</b>		
Sacha Schofield	Executive Regional Director - Chair	SS
Neil Davies	Headteacher, Beech Academy	ND
Bev Cooper	Staff Governor – Non-teaching	BC
Kathryn Johnson	Staff Governor - Teaching	KJ
Lara De Celis	Parent Governor	LDC
Mandy Simmons-Achapero	Parent Governor	MS-A
<b>Also Present:</b>		
Vicky Hawksley	Governors' Clerk	VH
<b>Apologies:</b>		
Paula Williams	Executive Regional Director	PW
<b>No Apologies:</b>		

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
1.1. To receive apologies for absence  Apologies were received from PW.	
1.2. To accept apologies for absence  Apologies were accepted for PW.	
2. BEST WE CAN BE AWARDS	
2.1 Presentation to staff nominee(s)  Already covered at the meeting held on 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2023.	
3. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
3.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered Chair to determine any items of urgent business.  None.	
4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
4.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda.  There were no declarations received.	
5. BEECH ACADEMY LOCAL GOVERNANCE MINUTES	
5.1 Approval of the Transition Board meeting held on 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2022  The minutes were approved.	
5.2 Review of Action Tracker  Actions were reviewed and the action tracker updated.	
5.3 Matters arising from the Minutes  None.	
6. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
6.1 Headteacher Report  Main points to note are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ND noted that this is the first Academy Council meeting the school has held since the Ofsted visit in January. We were pleased with the outcome of the visit, particularly considering the journey the school has taken over the last few years. Overall,</li> </ul>	

inspectors agreed with our own judgements about strengths and areas for development and were satisfied with the plans we have in place to address these areas.

- We have adjusted our dashboard to state that we are now a Good school but we acknowledge that there are still areas of practice that still require improvement.
- We will ensure that our curriculum is effective and sequenced and also look at our enrichment opportunities and provision, particularly around lunchtime clubs and break times to ensure we offer an array of different opportunities to students.

**Are you planning to staff these lunch and break time sessions via teachers and TAs?** Hopefully, teachers and TAs will be willing to participate.

ND explained that lunchtimes are still split at the moment but we are now considering moving back to a single lunchtime from September. In the past these activities have been supported by teachers and TAs and we hope that this will continue in the future.

The Chair congratulated ND and all staff at the school for their hard work and dedication in achieving the good Ofsted result. All staff have worked incredibly hard and should be proud of their achievement.

- Leadership and Management – ND feels that the culture at Beech is really positive. A lot of work has been done on the school's values, vision and culture and the positive increase in staffing has made a significant difference. Joining Nexus MAT has also had a positive impact on the school along with the recent inspection outcome.
- Safeguarding – Ofsted identified safeguarding in the school as a particular strength. ND stressed however that the school will not be complacent and will continue to prioritise safeguarding over and above anything else in school. There is a culture of strong safeguarding at Beech and student voice confirms this – students feel safe and know how to report any concerns.
- We now have 92 students on roll but are projecting this will rise to 95 in September. ND is working with the Local Authority to identify gaps within our cohort and we hope that the number on roll will increase to 100. This is above our planned places and we would need to ensure that funding accompanies these additional numbers.
- We are looking to develop the model at the Westfield site. From September we will increase the numbers at Westfield to between 35-40 and we plan to add another group from September 2024. This will equate to 7 groups of children from Y7 to Y13. We are looking to recruit staffing for these additional groups and have a staffing structure in place to incorporate these new groups. This has been included in next year's budget planning.
- We have currently made two of the 3 available appointments for teachers and have two vacancies for learning assistants. We have received a few strong applications and interviews will take place in a couple of weeks' time.
- Stakeholder voice – we have not conducted a Parent Voice exercise this term. The last one was done during the Autumn term and we are planning to conduct another survey in Summer 2. Engagement from parents is strong and we have lots of families coming into school for meetings etc.

**Do you feel that the retention rate of staff will increase following the positive Ofsted grade?** Yes, staffing feels much more settled and stable than it has been in recent years.

- Sickness absence – absence levels are low across the school and there are no patterns of absence which can be identified. No concerns in this area.
- Quality of Education – We have implemented the Teaching for Excellence model across the school and we are already seeing significant differences; we have greater consistency in the classroom and in planning of lessons. Further work is needed to support implementation of some lesson planning and delivery.
- We are also seeing greater consistency in the way that the Feedback Policy is being applied by staff and most of our teachers routinely provide the sort of feedback that students can reflect on and see a positive impact in their progress.
- Further work is needed on differentiation.
- Learning Assistants – despite a high turnover of staff in this area, Ofsted recognised the skill these staff have in supporting our children. ND noted however that these staff are less effective generally at supporting children academically within the classroom. DD is compiling a bespoke programme of training for our Learning Assistants which will take place over the next 12 months and will help them to reflect on their current practice and develop their support for children in the classroom. Teachers will also be invited to future sessions on this accredited programme which links with the University of Derby.
- Reading continues to be a main priority across the school but significant progress has been made. We use Read Write Inc as our phonics programme. ND referred governors to the positive comment that Ofsted made on reading and literacy at Beech.
- The school's overarching priority has been around revising and embedding the KS3 Novel Study curriculum.

**Is the consistency of the curriculum relating to KS3?** Yes, the preparation and planning that has been put into the KS3 curriculum has significantly reduced inconsistencies.

- Engagement in learning – the new assessment strategy and summative data were made available to Nexus at the end of the Autumn term. The strategy now in place is designed to set out how the school will understand what the pupils know, understand and can do and will support pupils in understanding the progress they are making.
- Celebrations of learning are being embedded. KJ explained what these involve from a science perspective and how this process benefits the children and helps them to develop skills in answering and understanding longer and more complex questions.
- Behaviour and attitudes – positive comments from Ofsted on this. There were a couple of suspensions in the autumn term but overall the school feels more settled. Three suspensions have been made this term so far and all have been dealt with accordingly.

**Are the students who have had suspensions also on AP?** Yes, there are one or two students accessing AP who are also affected by suspensions.

**Referring to internal isolation – is this really isolation? Could we change this term to 'reflective and restorative practice' rather than internal isolation?** Yes, ND will change this for the next report.

- Attendance – this is really positive overall, certainly in comparison to previous years. Attendance now stands at over 90% compared with less than 83% at this

**ND**  
**07/07/23**

<p>time last year. Robust processes are in place around attendance and procedures are clear and concise and any issues are responded to quickly and appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal development – positive comments received from Ofsted. Pupil Parliaments are strengthening, and we have an increasing number of children inputting into assemblies etc. We are looking at a co-ordinated approach to charity days. We have a growing number of children who are accessing the Duke of Edinburgh award.</li> <li>• Some KS3 children are also accessing swimming lessons and we have joined a PE group in collaboration with other special schools to access a wider range of sporting activities. We have entered our table cricket team into the county tournament and will be going back to Lords to defend our national title at the beginning of June.</li> <li>• The recent visit to Hagg Farm was very successful and we have already re-booked for next year.</li> <li>• We are involved in lots of activities around Careers and CIAG and are meeting most of the Gatsby Benchmark, with just 2 areas to finalise. We are planning to apply for the Prospects Career Mark to recognise the work done on this.</li> </ul> <p>6.1.1 Appendix 1 – Updated SIP – for information.</p> <p>6.1.2 Appendix 2 – School SEF – for information.</p> <p>6.1.3 Appendix 3 – Autumn Term Progress Outcomes</p>	
<p>6.2 Community Voice Report</p> <p>This report has already been circulated to members of the AC. No questions were raised.</p> <p>Henceforth, this report will be incorporated into the Headteacher’s report.</p> <p>Work on workforce wellbeing is ongoing and improved staffing levels are already having a positive impact on staff wellbeing. We are providing space for staff, within the new modular build at Beech, for staff to use for PPA time – we expect this building to be in place by September 2023.</p>	
<p>6.3 Budget Report</p> <p>For information only.</p>	
<p>6.4 School Calendar – for information.</p> <p>Noted for information only.</p> <p><b>Christmas Holidays – can ND clarify what these dates are and how they are made up. Do they include 2 INSET days?</b> ND explained that the two INSET days in January will be disaggregated and there will be twilights in lieu. ND to check the dates and length of the Christmas Holiday for 2023.</p>	<p><b>ND</b> <b>07/07/23</b></p>
<p>6.5 Cabinet Member &amp; MPs’ feedback from Pupil Parliament – Verbal</p> <p>Already covered at the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023.</p>	

<p>6.6 Skills Audit – Governor Self-Assessment – Verbal</p> <p>Deadline has now passed, and all forms have been returned to the Trust.</p>	
<b>7. TRUST MATTERS</b>	
<p>SS explained that the Trust is in the process of expanding and will be taking on another school in Rotherham (The Willows) in September and we are now a sponsor for Holgate Meadows School in Sheffield. Discussions are ongoing with a number of other schools locally.</p> <p>The Trust is developing CPD learning pathways for staff in all areas of the trust to enable staff to develop and progress.</p> <p>The Central Team is expanding rapidly and we are now seeking additional office space.</p>	
<b>8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
<p>8.1. To consider any other urgent business.</p> <p><b>Relating to the Best We Can Be Awards – are the staff who were given these awards able to mention this to their colleagues?</b> ND explained that, moving forward, as soon as the awards have been presented ND will inform the wider staff which colleagues have been recognised. ND will send an email to staff today informing them of the awards presented on 27<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p><b>MS-A explained that her daughter will be leaving the school this summer. Can she remain on the Academy Council after her daughter has left the school?</b> Clerk to pick this up with Clerking Services at the Trust.</p>	<p><b>ND</b> <b>09/10/23</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b> <b>07/07/23</b></p>
<b>9. CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
<p>9.1 To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting.</p> <p>None.</p>	
<b>10. DATES OF NEXT MEETING</b>	

Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	10:30 – 12:00	Academy Council
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**Minutes approved**

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE