

# Minutes – Winterstoke Hundred Academy

**Meeting Date:** 16 December 2024

**Location:** WHA

**Time:** 4.00pm

**Chair:**

<i>Vacancy</i>	Sponsor Councillor & Chair
Kathryn Volk (KV)	Sponsor Councillor
<i>Vacancy</i>	Sponsor Councillor
<i>Vacancy</i>	Sponsor Councillor
Charlotte Sexton (CS)	Support Staff Councillor
Chris Henley (CH)	Parent Councillor
Sian Williams (SW)	Parent Councillor ( <i>joined at 4.10pm</i> )
Ciarán Elster (CE)	Teacher Councillor ( <i>joined at 4.10pm</i> )
Clare Towler (CT)	Sponsor Councillor ( <i>joined at 4.10pm</i> )

**In Attendance:**

Matt Randle (MR)	Principal
Annie Massey (AM)	Vice Principal
Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk ( <i>joined via Teams</i> )
Carlo Hooper (CH)	

**Apologies:** Tony Searle (TS) Executive Principal

Item	Description	Action
1.0	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies	
1.1	KV chaired and welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
1.2	Apologies were accepted for	
1.3	Absent without apologies:	
1.4	The meeting was not quorate.	
2.0	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	The Academy Councillors confirmed that they had no pecuniary interests relevant to this meeting.	
3.0	Academy Council Membership	
3.1	AC membership: There are currently three Sponsor vacancies, one of which is for a Chair.	
3.2	All the Academy Councillors were reminded to provide a bio for the website and their photograph.	
3.3.	The Academy Councillors were reminded of the importance of completing their training as soon as possible so that the WHA SCR is compliant.	
4.0	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
4.1	The minutes of the meeting of 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2024 were approved.	
5.0	Matters Arising & Actions	
5.1	6.6 - MR to add a proposal to the T2 Agenda to cap Y11 at 120 – <b>Completed. Y11 is currently at 120 students.</b>	

5.2	6.23 - MR to arrange for Carlo to attend the next meeting and present on PP data - <b>Completed</b>	
6.0	<b>Y11 Black Box Data - CH</b>	
6.1	This is the Y11 data and what actions are going to take before the next set of mocks in about five weeks' time.	
6.2	I'm new to WHA and over the last 75 days have been getting to know the Y11 cohort – they are the first Y11 cohort at WHA.	
6.3	Some of our students struggled with doing their mocks at the Beaufigther site, because despite knowing the site well, for some of them they become very heightened when in that building.	
6.4	We are pushing attendance at the moment. Historically, Y11 isn't usually a cohort that schools have attendance concerns over, but at WHA we are regularly seeing attendance at 75% for some students which we are addressing.	
6.5	[REDACTED]	
6.6	We have several staff who despite being experienced, have no experience of a Y11 cohort and this cohort has a high level of need within it.	
6.7	Our basics saw a marginal decrease in English and Maths, but it's not unusual to find predictions in Y10 tricky.	
6.8	[REDACTED]	
6.9	Moving from Food Tech to Hospitality & Catering will remove a lot of the science elements that some of the cohort struggle with and there is a bigger weighting on the practical element which is beneficial for students who struggle with exams. We also have some expertise in delivering that subject and what the students have learned to date won't go to waste.	
6.10	<b>Is it typical to change a course part way through the academic year?</b> No, it's not typical, but we discussed it with other Principal's who have done the same thing and had positive outcomes and it's in the best interests of the majority of our cohort.	
6.11	<b>Is there a risk that some students would not have chosen that course as an option and will now be disincentivised?</b> The vast majority of students that I have spoken to have embraced the change positively. The engagement has been strong and it shouldn't negatively impact students and their next placement following WHA.	
6.12	<b>Were parents made aware of the rationale for the change?</b> WHA do need to work on their parental communication. We had to make a decision based on the data which we did quickly by consulting with other schools in the Trust.	
6.13	The target for this cohort is for at least 70% to achieve A Grade 4 in their Maths and English with 45% achieved a Grade 5 in Maths at least.	
6.14	Progress 8 used to measure the progress in student's eight best subjects. If we scored above zero then that meant our students achieved a better outcome than other schools nationally.	
6.15	We can't measure progress now because there is no Y6 SATS data, so we are having to use attainment as the success measure which means if you have a cohort who were low on entry, you can't demonstrate the progress that they have made, only the outcome that they achieve. This is also true for our current Y10s, but our current Y9s will have progress data, although the government may choose to retain attainment data instead.	
6.16	So, Y11 attendance is a key focus because we have some persistently absent students. However, because it's a relatively small cohort we can be really robust with our procedures, and we have seen an improvement in some student's attendance by using bespoke part-time timetables and then building them back up. We are also working closely with families and external agencies to support them back into school.	

6.17	<b>Have your persistent absent students always had that attendance pattern, or has it started in Y11?</b> I've not noticed any students who have suddenly become persistently absent in Y11.	
6.18	We had a group of 70 students who demonstrated an 8% shift in attendance in a single week following support from across the staff body. We could see that students appreciated the check-in from several members of staff and celebrating success.	
6.19	<b>Do you offer career advice so severely absent students?</b> Yes, we offer home visits. We find that engaging students in thinking about their next steps can help them focus on what they need to do now.	
6.20	We've increased the number of penalty notices that we've issued to hold families to account for getting their children to school.	
6.21	We've had support from the Attendance Officer at Broadoak which has been very impactful an in assemblies we always recognize students who have improved their attendance.	
6.22	About 75% of our severely absent students have had a really challenging education journey prior to coming to WHA.	
6.23	We are offering a period 7 study option every day which will include bespoke plans for students, and they can work with teachers in small groups with some incentives for attending.	
6.24	<b>How is the study group identified? Is it PP/SEND students?</b> Yes, plus crossover students who are on the boundary. We want to build a positive vibe around the group so that it becomes attractive to attend it.	
6.25	I'm going to be meeting with Subject Lead and Middle Leaders to review the predicted and black box data and discussing raising attainment strategies. We've done this for several years at HPA and it's been well received.	
6.26	I meet with the Head of English and the Head of Maths every fortnight who are focusing on key students achieving their spoken assessments. We've had some really good success with that, especially in our severely absent students because it's a really good skill for them to develop. I'll also arrange a learning walk with them to make sure the provision is as strong as it can be.	
6.27	Using prom as a reward can be very motivating for some students. We want students to be in school, on time and working hard and we offer support to those students who need it.	
6.28	<b>Have the hoodies been ordered?</b> Yes, they are due to be delivered at the end of February and they will be able to wear them in the building which will give them some prestige.	
6.29	<b>Is the school prom unobtainable for some students?</b> Success looks different for different students. We support students to achieve their best.	
6.30	The PP catchups were challenging because they were on the other site, therefore I will address this by planning them more regularly and refining the process. Despite the challenges, the PP catchups were successful due to the staff working hard as a team to support the students.	
6.31	<b>Are there SEND PP students who would benefit from a transition period before the mocks?</b> Yes, therefore we will plan that carefully for next year and for future cohorts who aren't familiar with that site.	
6.32	<b>Will Beaufighter Rd remain the Exam Centre?</b> Yes, because we would need two Exams Officers to run effectively on two sites and the space on this site is more challenging.	
6.33	We will have Y7, Y8 and Y9 to Beaufighter for some of their Science lessons which will also familiarise them with the site.	
6.34	The Maths teacher projected the Maths paper onto the screen and talked them through it which was a positive exam practice experience and had a good impact.	
6.35	<b>How will you support the teaching team with the second site?</b> We will provide feedback to their SLT to ensure that appropriate support is in place.	

6.36	<b>How often do the meetings take place?</b> We have a set planned for January and will meet again after the data drop to determine what is working well.	
6.37	There is time in the PD planning for the teams to get together and share planning and moderation and looking at what went well and what needs further development. The January inset day will provide an additional PD session for this reason.	
6.38	<b>Do you offer a buddy-system for staff?</b> In the English Department they share best practice because there is a team. But if students are doing well in other subjects that are heavily literacy based, e.g. History, they can liaise with that team also.	
	<b>ARV – Annie Massey?</b>	
6.39	We have changed the ARV model and now have an ARV regularly so that we can work with peers across the leadership structure. We worked with colleagues from across the Trust to look at literacy and they have given us some next steps and actions to work on.	
6.40	I worked at Kings Oak to see what they are doing in terms of attendance.	
6.41	<b>Kings Oak is a through school, does that have an impact on attendance?</b> They only have about 30 students in Y6 who move through to Y7, therefore there are still a lot of Y7 students new to the KOA attendance culture.	
6.42	Some of the processes that had worked in KS2 were rolled into Y7 and Y8 which worked well, therefore we may see if some of our processes could be adopted by the feeder primaries.	
6.43	Andy at KOA worked with Cheryl in the front office and noted that she is challenging absence. An action what arose was to script what she does so that colleagues are more confident when challenging absence.	
6.44	Andy also pointed out that anyone with attendance responsibilities needs to be aware of where a family is on the attendance stages so that they are all giving a consistent message. Bromcom has some processes that we can adopt which will be more efficient. We need to streamline the systems we use. Because Bromcom is a very powerful management information system we will transition more to using that platform.	
6.45	Student voice was very positive about the staff and the building, they understood their behaviour points but sometimes conflated that with their attendance percentage. Girls indicated that they were unhappy with the gender-neutral toilets which is also the same feedback that KOA have had.	
6.46	Some students weren't keen on the double lessons but SEND students found them supportive because they have to move around less often. We will make some adjustments were possible, dependent on staff.	
6.47	Some staff were inconsistent with their uniform expectations—some classrooms are colder than others, but none require a coat.	
6.48	Students were in class and not misbehaving, but their learning appeared passive.	
6.49	<b>How can you change your teaching practice so that learning is less passive?</b> If a question is asked to the whole class before giving a name, it means all the students have to think about an answer, so it involves them all. Moving around the room and structuring the 100 minutes appropriately are all skills that teachers can utilise.	
6.50	Students who are late to the lessons miss the retrieval session and the set-up for the lesson, and it's disruptive to the other students. Therefore, we are trialling having a cut-off time after which students can't join the lesson.	
6.51	<b>Has resistance to being on time to lessons increased with the 100-minute lessons?</b> It's gotten better because the culture has improved. There are some groups of students who stroll leisurely through the corridors and then step into the room just before the lesson starts, but they are a minority. We haven't found that students who used to be punctual aren't when there is a double lesson to attend.	
6.52	<b>Can students have movement breaks?</b>	

	Yes, they are collected half-way through the double lesson which means the teacher can plan for them leaving.	
6.53	Double lessons have meant less moving around, and no additional register or additional retrieval time, therefore they are saving a lot of time. We can also use brain breaks to invigorate students.	
6.54	Becky Collis from HPA visited to review our reading strategy and recognised that it's very ambitious because it determines a reading age and the reading barriers. Students with a reading age of 9 years 5 months or below are supported with 'That Reading Thing'.	
6.55	Rachel Simmons has provided CPD with our reading systems and we are reviewing the library space.	
6.56	We've introduced booklets with additional oracy and mini tests which the students have engaged with.	
6.57	Y11 lesson observations with Tewkesbury have taken place which indicated that the areas to improve were pace and meeting need which we have planned PD for.	
6.58	Some of the books indicated lots of opportunities for extended writing and peer improvement as well as regular teacher feedback. SPAG remains an area of consistency that we need to address.	
6.59	The ARV process will run again in T4, therefore we will re-visit the same things and hopefully have the same colleagues so that they can see the progress we have made.	
	<b>AC Report - MR</b>	
6.60	We have four students from other schools on site currently who will eventually return to their home academy.	
6.61	16 students have left since September and 17 students have joined. Mobility remains high and students are leaving for genuine reasons like moving house.	
6.62	Two admission appeals have been upheld, therefore Y8 is over-PAN.	
6.63	A member of staff will go on mat leave in January; therefore, we are recruiting to the vacancy. A member of staff in the Science department has resigned.	
6.64	A new drama teacher starts in January. A law teacher has started and is delivering P-16 courses. We have four ECT teachers currently with two joining in January. There are two SKITT trainees joining and we have recruited a new raising standards lead.	
6.65	YTD attendance is 88.9% Y7-Y11 vs 88.6% last year. Y11 is a focus for attendance.	
6.66	SEND-E has reduced in Y7 but there are several students with EHCPs who have applied for Y7 places next September.	
6.67	There was an increase in WHA as first-choice places, so we are anticipating being full next year.	
6.68	There have been 82 applications to date. Last year we had much higher applications and converted less than half therefore we need to increase these applications.	
6.69	<b>How many of the applications are from WHA students?</b> About 35, but a lot haven't applied yet.	
6.70	<b>Which courses are the most attractive?</b> We've not analysed applications vs courses yet, however we have committed to some courses with lower numbers. Our cohort tends to be a three A-Level application group, but we would prefer our sixth form to be more inclusive and offer a hybrid model or a three-year option with vocational subjects on offer.	
6.71	All Y11 EHCP students have a transition plan to College in September.	
6.72	Having different colours in the SEND area has been very helpful and there is a teacher in place in the quiet space which has been well received.	
	We can offer a programme of 6-8 weeks of core study but with support on site for interventions with a view to returning them to full-time education. The funding has been received for that and we've recruited to the position.	
6.73	<b>A lot of Y11 students have been suspended?</b>	

	Yes. It is a challenging cohort and we use SURPs at BA or HPA where possible. There is high SEND need and EHCPs in that cohort though which means that often SURPs are not a viable option. Some students were in-year admissions from BA or HPA in which case we can't use a SURP.	
6.74	<b>Do suspensions change behaviour?</b> No. What's key is the reintegration meeting and what we do to support the student when they return. We use a graduated response wherever possible and only use suspension as a last resort.	
6.75	Parents have indicated that communication has improved which has been appreciated. We will bring in a Communications Policy next year.	
	<b>Finance</b>	
6.76	A £62k surplus is forecast, but we need to identify £13k of in-year savings due to lower student numbers than budgeted against, and an increase in national insurance contributions.	
6.77	Supply costs are high due to staff absence, and we have gone over budget for external provision already.	
6.78	<b>Is WHA benefitting from LHA being on site at Beaufighter?</b> They pay their portion of the bills but there is no rental agreement. We have to use the Fair Access panel if we have students who may require LHA provision. We are working closely together in terms of logistics.	
6.79	<b>Were the mocks disturbed?</b> A fire alarm went off which resulted in a short delay.	
7.0	<b>Policies</b>	
7.1	None.	
8.0	<b>Matters for the Board/COAC</b>	
8.1	None.	
9.0	<b>AOB</b>	
9.1	KV wished all the staff and Academy Councillors a restful Christmas break.	
10.0	<b>Close of Meeting</b>	
10.1	The meeting closed at 5.50pm	