

Minutes – Lansdown Park Academy

Meeting Date: 25 March 2026
Location: Lansdown Park Academy
Time: 3.30pm

	Kathryn Volk (KV)	Chair Academy Council
	Vacancy	Support Staff Academy Councillor
	Vacancy	Teacher Academy Councillor
	Vacancy	Parent Councillor
	Vacancy	Sponsor Academy Councillor
	Amy Crown (AC)	Parent Councillor
	Kristy Chambers (KC)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
Apologies	Sue Burns (SB)	Clerk
	Laura Maley (LM)	Sponsor Academy Councillor
In Attendance:	Paul Todd (PT)	Principal
	Esther Stephens (ES)	
	Wendy Hellin (WH)	Cover Clerk

Item	Description	Action
1.0	Introductions	
1.1	The meeting commenced at 3.30pm and Kathryn Volk welcomed all attendees.	
1.2	Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Burns and Laura Maley.	
1.3	The quorum is 3 – only one of whom can be a Staff Councillor. If there is less than 3 in the meeting then the meeting cannot make any decisions or approve any policies, or minutes of the last meeting.	
1.4	The meeting was quorate.	
2.0	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest pertinent to the meeting content.	
3.0	Minutes of the last meeting	
3.1	The minutes of 4 th February 2026 were agreed to be a true and accurate record.	
3.2	Actions and Matters Arising from those minutes – none.	
4.0	Trauma Informed Schools – Esther Stephens	
4.1	ES provided an update on the school's trauma-informed accreditation, explaining that while trauma-informed practice has long been embedded in the school's culture, the accreditation process has enabled the school to refine its approach and gain formal recognition. She outlined the importance of this work, noting that every student arrives with some form of trauma—whether historic, ongoing, or educational—and that without addressing these needs, pupils are unable to fully access learning. The trauma-informed model focuses on creating safety, belonging, and curiosity about the underlying causes of behaviour, enabling students to move on from past experiences and re-engage with education.	
4.2	ES described the two-year accreditation journey, including her completion of a specialist diploma, leadership training for senior staff, and termly whole-staff training focused on neuroscience and trauma-responsive practice. During the accreditation visit, the assessor, an experienced PRU headteacher, evaluated whether the school's approaches were not only developed but fully embedded. He was highly impressed by the consistency of practice and	

	the school's strong outcomes for reintegration, repeatedly commenting on how unusually successful LPA is in supporting pupils to thrive after joining.	
4.3	The resulting report was extremely positive, highlighting that pupils who have experienced significant adversity are able to quickly develop a sense of safety and belonging, with some achieving attendance as high as 98% once placed in LPA's provision. Parents described the school as transformative, reporting that their children feel safe, happy, and accepted. The assessor indicated that LPA will be used as exemplar practice for trauma-informed work. ES emphasised that although she led the accreditation, the success reflects the dedication of every member of staff, and the school is proud of the recognition received.	
4.4	Questions from Academy Councillors	
4.5	Congratulations on the high-quality trauma-informed accreditation report; it is great to read. How does the academy identify each child's trauma history?	
4.5.1	Information is gathered through conversations with previous schools, parents, and by reviewing existing safeguarding and contextual information. However, not all trauma is known immediately, or even during their time at LPA, as pupils disclose experiences at their own pace. Many children arrive with complex safeguarding histories, and the trauma timeline is built gradually and sensitively. Some children arrive having never spoken openly to a trusted adult before, and our setting often begins the first steps in long-term therapeutic journeys. Trauma information is handed over on reintegration, including updated plans, pupil passports, and intervention histories. Staff continue outreach once pupils leave, ensuring continuity and advocacy during transition.	
4.6	Do you have input into the choice of each pupil's future key adult in their receiving school?	
4.6.1	No, we do not directly choose key adults. Primary settings typically assign class teachers and pastoral staff; secondary settings have slightly more flexibility within larger pastoral structures. Our role is to skill and prepare the receiving adults wherever possible, supporting them to become effective key relationships for the child.	
4.7	Can placements be extended where pupils are not yet ready to reintegrate?	
4.7.1	While the standard placement length is 12 weeks for secondary and around 16 weeks for primary, many pupils require longer. Some complete multiple 12-week blocks, up to the maximum permitted. Decisions are tailored to individual need; for example, one pupil is completing a second block while gradually reintegrating back into their home school, supported by a hybrid timetable. Others may remain with us until the end of Year 9 before moving to an Alternative Learning Provision (ALP). Extensions may require agreement from home schools regarding funding, we continue to work with pupils even after reintegration begins, maintaining that support.	
4.8	Does the trauma-informed accreditation also cover the outreach programme?	
4.8.1	Yes, the outreach programme led by Toby sits fully within the accredited model. Outreach operates both during placements and in the reintegration phase, with primary pupils receiving daily contact initially and secondary pupils receiving six weeks of weekly support. The next phase of the trauma-informed work will involve using the outreach arm to share best practice city-wide.	
4.9	In terms of staff engagement with reflective supervision, the report details that some staff have opted out. How does the school plan to support staff who are hesitant or resistant?	
4.9.1	The school has explored multiple supervision models, including work with CLF supervisor Ange Hart, trauma-informed schools supervision (for Esther and Hannah), ELSA supervision for trained staff, and bespoke one-to-one arrangements where needed. Some staff choose not to take up supervision, either due to previous experiences or because they feel well-supported through existing school mechanisms. However, LPA is continuing to diversify supervision offers, including more creative and accessible approaches (e.g., structured walking supervision groups), and will keep expanding provision to meet differing staff needs.	
4.10	What support does LPA provide to families and carers in relation to trauma?	

4.10.1	Support for families forms part of the trauma-informed model, particularly through Family Thrive, welcome events, signposting, and frequent communication. Staff work closely with families to tailor support, recognising that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Examples include guiding parents through medical appointments, offering targeted resources, and providing ongoing advice through pastoral and Thrive-trained staff. While this support is not always packaged as a formal programme, it is highly personalised, reflecting the deep relationships staff build with families.	
5.0	Academy Council Report	
5.1	A discussion took place about the outstanding action regarding non-compliance of SCR checks. PT confirmed that it had been checked, however, the trust's DSL advised it needed to be checked termly and therefore the check was out of date by a couple of weeks. PT confirmed it is now being checked termly as required.	
5.2	PT provided a confidential update on the union action taking place at Tewkesbury Academy and Hanham Wood Academy.	
5.3	PT gave a confidential update on members of staff currently on support plans.	
5.4	Attendance	
5.4.1	PT reported a continued improvement in whole-school attendance, which has now risen to 90.6%, an increase of approximately 0.6–0.7 percentage points since the last report. This upward movement is considered significant given the time of year, and places the school well above national averages, strengthening its position for future Ofsted scrutiny. Only one pupil (Year 6) remains persistently absent (around 70%), and earlier PA cases have left the roll, contributing to the improved overall picture. A new primary cohort has joined with strong attendance, further raising figures.	
5.4.2	PT highlighted the importance of tracking attendance relative to pupils' prior settings, as many show substantial improvement once placed at LPA. This long-term tracker is being refined to present a simple headline measure of average improvement on entry. Anecdotally, staff noted that excellent attendance is closely linked to the school's trauma-informed culture; pupils feel safe, want to attend, and the school has recently achieved near-100% attendance weeks.	
5.4.3	PT outlined a four-year trajectory of improvement, with attendance rising from 67% to 84% to 87% to 91%, reflecting a major cultural shift from previous low-expectation practice. Staff now set clear expectations that all pupils attend daily, with swift follow-up when they do not. The small-school dynamics mean future attendance figures may fluctuate, depending on the needs of new admissions, transport arrangements, and learners with medical needs.	
5.4.4	What is the attendance pattern by gender?	
5.4.5	The current patterns reflect the very small number of girls on roll, which limits the significance of gender-based comparisons. Overall, high expectations, strengthened systems, and improved pupil experience have contributed to the positive attendance trajectory.	
5.5	Ofsted Readiness (standing item)	
5.5.1	The Academy Council received an update on Ofsted readiness from Paul Todd, who reported on the recent Term 3 Academy Review Meeting with Susie and Chris Baker. The review acknowledged both the high expectations and support plans in place for the youngest class, where further improvements are required, and also the strong adaptive teaching and high-quality classroom experience evident across the other four classes. Based on current evidence, leaders believe the school is performing at a mix of strong and expected levels across key judgement areas, which aligns with their intended trajectory.	
5.5.2	PT described some challenges with staffing and the quality of provision and explained steps being taken to address this.	
5.5.3	How does the expectation for staff to use non-intrusive behaviour strategies align with the trauma-informed approach? What does "non-intrusive" mean in practice?	

5.5.4	Non-intrusive strategies are rooted in noticing, early intervention, and relational understanding of pupils, rather than waiting for behaviours to escalate. This includes subtle redirection, positive reinforcement and re-engagement through conversation before issues become significant. Training with Sarah Morrison has supported this work, particularly in the youngest class, where staff must be more proactive and consistent in their approach. Good practice is already evident across other classes, where subtle, skilled behaviour management is well embedded.	
5.6	Academy Scrutiny Meeting	
5.6.1	KV advised that she and PT recently attended the Academy Scrutiny Panel meeting, where academies are invited to a half hour meeting where trustees and external scrutiny panel members ask questions about the school and its progress. Following the meeting the panel provide feedback to the Principal and may make recommendations. KV confirmed the final paragraph from the feedback was as follows: Overall, the panel concluded that the school is in a strong position with enthusiastic leaders and well-developed systems, while also recognising that continued Ofsted preparation and deep understanding of the new framework will remain important.	
5.6.2	KV noted that one of the recommendations was for the academy to focus on articulating the impact of strategies and actions. PT highlighted the importance of evidencing impact using both quantitative data and qualitative case studies. While data analysis continues to show progress, well-constructed case studies remain essential, particularly for external scrutiny such as Ofsted or senior trust reviews. Staff were reminded that case studies must be detailed, and ready for presentation at any time, especially for pupils involved in outreach, where Toby may be asked to talk through individual journeys during a visit.	
5.6.3	It was noted that, given the small number of pupils, the academy could feasibly produce a case study for every child, though a minimum set of six will be required for Ofsted, who may select pupils themselves. Leaders discussed the practicalities of producing case studies efficiently and an Academy Councillor suggested that AI tools could support drafting, with staff completing final review and personalisation. The AC agreed that preparing a broader set of case studies would strengthen the school's evidence base, capturing themes such as attendance improvement, destinations, and learning outcomes. KV proposed bringing three on-site case studies to the next meeting, alongside assessment information from Hannah. ACTION: PT to share some case studies at the next meeting.	PT
6	Link Councillor visits	
6.1	KV advised that several link Councillor visits are due to be arranged. KC confirmed she has already completed her safeguarding link visit with Justin, while the health and safety link visit still needs to be scheduled. It was agreed that the next visit would involve Claire and that an introductory email will be sent so Councillors can meet Claire, who is available on Mondays and Fridays. Discussion also took place regarding the careers link role, with Councillors noting they require a clearer understanding of expectations for this responsibility. ACTION: WH to send KC and KV the link role descriptors.	WH
7	Policies	
7.1	None.	
8	Matters for the attention of the Board/COAC	
8.1	None.	
9	AOB	
9.1	Commissioning Arrangements PT reported that BaNES has formally given notice that its primary commissioning agreement will end on 27 September, a change the academy had anticipated due to BaNES securing new primary premises. Although this presents a potential financial risk, LPA has already begun exploring alternative arrangements in anticipation of BaNES' withdrawal.	

9.2	No further business was reported.	
9.3	The next meeting takes place on 1 July 2026. The meeting closed at 4.50pm.	

Action No	Action	Owner
25.03.26 01	PT to share some student case studies at the next meeting, to demonstrate impact around attendance, progress etc.	PT