

Minutes – Summerhill Academy Council

Version: Approved
Date Monday 24 November 2025
Location: Summerhill Academy
Time: 4.30 pm

Type	Name	Link Role/date	Term Expires	In Attendance
Sponsor 1 - Chair	Kerry Francis (KF)		11/07/2026	Y
Sponsor 2	Vacancy			
Sponsor 3	Mike Eatwell (ME)	SEND	15/11/2027	Y
Sponsor 4	Lydia Mantle (LM)	Safeguarding	04/07/2027	A
Sponsor 5	Vacancy			
Parent 1	Dominic Smith (DS)		01/02/2028	Y part
Parent 2	Kate Strong (KS)		01/02/2028	Y
Teacher	Luke Wilson-Reid (LWR)		13/10/2026	Y part
Support Staff	Lily Lowther (LL)		13/10/2026	Y
In Attendance				
Principal	Chris Barratt (CB)		STAFF	Y
Education Director	Kate Richardson (KR)		STAFF	Y
Student Advocate	Kirsty McLeod – Hughes (KMH)			Y
Clerk	Wendy Hellin (WH)		STAFF	A

Action No	Action	Owner
03.02.25 01	CB to consider introducing bar badges for library monitors. Update: The school is still looking at different roles children have in school. Ongoing	CB
22.09.25 01	The election for Vice Chair will carry over to the next meeting.	KF WH

	Description	Action
1	Introductions	
1.1	KF welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies are recorded above.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	No new declarations were made.	
3	Minutes of Previous Meeting	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting of 22 September 2025 were agreed as accurate.	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	The action table (above) has been updated. Actions to carry forward are included in a table at the foot of these minutes.	
5	Academy Council Report - Questions on the report from Academy Councillors	
5.1	Attendance - congratulations on the hard work, especially given the difference between Infant and SA figures on the benchmarking. Is there any cross school working in terms of attendance processes that could ultimately reap rewards for SA too?	
5.1.1	The relationship with the infant school is good. CB meets with the Head regularly. There is now some good cross school working, especially in areas such as phonics, with both schools working with the English Hub. Both schools now use the same programme: Read Write Ink. Last year some similar work began in maths, with the infant school now part of the Boolean maths hub. Cross working with the infant school on attendance is slightly more complex, due	

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	to the contextual nature of attendance. The infant school now shares the pupil level attendance data much earlier to enable action plans to be put in place before the pupils start in Year 3. Each cohort of pupils at Summerhill Academy tends to improve in terms of attendance as they move up through the year groups. The work the team have done over time is now paying dividends and impact is being seen in the attendance data.	
5.2	Are the improvements due to the cohort changes?	
5.2.1	No, it is more about the systems and processes in place and being followed robustly.	
5.3	Do you issue fines?	
5.3.1	We do. We use the full suite of resources available to us. However, we do consider the context around each case and make sensible decisions. We know the families really well. They understand the attendance processes and are good at communicating with us around this.	
5.4	DS joined the meeting.	
5.5	It is good to see the school is going for School of Sanctuary status. What, if anything, will change at Summerhill? Is there a network of SoS across Bristol? And is the 'What we will learn' list aimed at Summerhill staff/students/both, and how will it be delivered?	
5.5.1	We are very happy to be part of the School of Sanctuary (SoS). There is a network across Bristol, Bristol is a City of Sanctuary. City Academy and Evergreen are each already a School of Sanctuary and we have very good links already with those CLF schools. It is a year-long process. Representatives from SoS came in and gave a presentation to staff as part of the inset day training. The next step is for someone to come in and complete a comprehensive audit of what we should have in place. An action plan will come out of the back of that audit and we will work on that action plan across terms 3, 4, 5 and put in a submission in term 6 about where we are and hopefully will be awarded it. We are relatively confident. The way we work already aligns with the vision for a School of Sanctuary. We have a steering group in place to complete the audit.	
5.6	Will this change anything about the way pupils are admitted, or give priority to any group of children?	
5.6.1	We already take children from outside of the area. We have spaces so will take children from anywhere. There is just one year group where we are full. School of Sanctuary are not a political organisation. They support organisations to ensure they welcome asylum seekers and refugees, without giving any political view. We will think about how to appropriately celebrate and promote the award, should it be given at the end of the year.	
5.7	Does the school have the necessary resources to focus on this award while maintaining standards elsewhere across the school?	
5.7.1	Yes. The more we look at it, the more aligned with our values it is anyway. It is around our culture and is a good fit. It will not halt work in other areas.	
5.8	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: How do you ensure that celebration events such as black history month don't become tokenistic and the legacy / understanding continues through the year, rather than just in October?	
5.8.1	While we do celebrate black history month, it is definitely not just about October, we consider how we can celebrate things throughout the year. We carried out some family voice some time ago and the feedback was that families were keen to celebrate black history month. We have done a lot of work over the years to ensure the curriculum fits the community and considered carefully the way we enact the CLF curriculum at Summerhill. There has also been a lot of work in the last few years to diversify the reading curriculum and give access to a range of texts that cover black history, pride, disability and a range of other areas. This includes authors, characters, themes and genres. The EDI action team worked on this. This is just one example of how we feed this through the curriculum throughout the year. The focus on black history month is then about how we go the extra mile for that month.	
5.9	Do you celebrate Pride?	

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5.9.1	Yes, we do. We also focus on how inclusivity fits in with our values and through the curriculum. Part of it is visibly welcoming pupils, through marking occasions, but also with books, texts, displays	
5.10	How does the school best promote events where families, carers and parents can engage more with the school? (like the big draw - or black history month). How far in advance are these planned, and is there a 'year to view' calendar that can help families, parents and carers keep these in mind. There is coverage on class dojo, but it would be helpful to have the whole year view to know what is coming up. This would help families with planning, especially where costumes are required; knowing in advance is helpful where there is a need to keep the costs down.	
5.10.1	It does exist in that format. It is all on class dojo in the calendar. We can see the overview but we will explore what the parent view looks like. It may be different and we can explore how better to display that so that parents can see the whole year view.	
5.10.2	ACTION: CB to request that the office team include a yearly planner for parents on class dojo	
5.11	I would be interested to hear more about how the safeguarding concerns are considered, managed and then followed up with children, parents and carers. What support and training is offered to staff when managing these sensitive topics such as bereavement or sexual harm?	
5.11.1	We have got a number of different layers of safeguarding training in school. We have a DSL, and DDSL. LL is completing training to be a further DDSL. LW has had some higher-level training. I am DSL trained, as is the SENCo, meaning all of SLT have quite a high level of training.	
5.11.2	We make sure all of our staff have a strong level of safeguarding training and we do this in a number of ways. As well as Nimble training (updated yearly) we have a weekly briefing. The first part is the safeguarding question of the week, with themes like bereavement, bullying on the playground, sexual behaviours. This highlights different scenarios and asks a series of questions about what staff would do in a situation. The answers to the questions are given at bottom of the briefing and we talk through that. All key topics are covered. The second part is a safeguarding reminder. This is operational or reactive. It might be in response to a key theme of something flagged like a Tik Tok video or safeguarding audit item. It keeps safeguarding in the forefront of everyone's mind.	
5.11.3	We use CPOMs (safeguarding and behaviour online logging system) a secure system that everyone can use to log incidents. Staff are trained in how to use it. If there is an emergency staff can radio for support. The CPOMs system alerts all members of the safeguarding team and some other relevant adults. Louise leads on it. All of us triage all of the information. It could be a disagreement between pupils that is logged and is easy to resolve. Or it could be something that contributes towards building a bigger picture such as a child presenting with low mood. Key staff received regular updates through the trust wide safeguarding network, led by SB and SW and LD attends BCC briefings too. We provide a bespoke approach for each child, our approach is not one size fits all. We use Jigsaw for the PHSE programme. We use other external agencies too, for support, such as Brook. We have a lot of vulnerable children.	
5.12	Breakfast club: What a brilliant turn out on the breakfast club! Is it financially viable with the DfE funding? Have you seen any anecdotal / data impact in terms of attendance or morning settling into class? Are you able to collect some case studies to showcase how fantastic it is?	
5.12.1	We have good attendance to Breakfast Club daily. It started strong and remains quite popular. Not all of the schools that have introduced breakfast club have been successful; I had an interview today with a representative from the DfE asking about how we had made such a success of it. We have just kept it low key, low stakes. It is a low threshold start to the school day; it is not big event. Our point of view is that we want children to look forward to coming to school, whatever that looks like. Some come to breakfast club to see friends, some do not actually eat any breakfast and we are happy to encourage that. We have new year 3 children	

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	that joined in September. At first they were not sure about it but it has only taken about a month and now many of them come into breakfast club. There is an emphasis on no pressure; children can come in and chat or come in and have food. We talk a lot about low threshold here; a lot of children need it. Base camp is a good example of a low threshold start to the day for some of our most vulnerable children. While we promote that low threshold start to the day, it does not mean that we lower expectations for the rest of the day. We have multiple children who have far less anxiety around coming across the school threshold to have a start in breakfast club. We know this through pupil voice. We are starting to think about how we can capture that best practise and share it with other schools as well as creating some individual case studies.	
5.13	Is breakfast club affordable and sustainable for the school? Does the school receive sufficient funding?	
5.13.1	Yes, it has been working out. Aspens cater it. We pay one member of their team to come in one hour early. It is a simple food offer that meets the dietary requirements at the right cost. It has been announced that funding will increase from 60p to £1 per child, with an additional £25 per day standing payment. The extra will cover the additional staffing costs; LL covers breakfast club from 8.15am. We view it as an investment overall; having breakfast club means that more children will have a good start to the day and will want to come into school. It also means that groups of children arrive at the school at various times, rather than altogether. This means we can personally welcome everyone on a more individual basis. It also supports those families that want to drop children off at 8.15am so they can get to work.	
5.14	Are there any concerns around what the children are eating at breakfast club, especially if they have high sugar foods?	
5.14.1	We do offer cereals, but the uptake is not actually high. We serve a lot of toast, which is very popular. We know families really well. If we haven't seen a family and they are running late, staff will know whether to hold back some toast for them, or if they are a family that will choose the fruit and yoghurt option, for example. Generally speaking, the average Summerhill child is physically smaller than other children and this is usually due to nutrition. Most benefit from the food offer; it would be rare for us to be concerned about a child having an additional piece of toast.	
6	Policies	
6.1	The Academy Council noted the following policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil friendly anti bullying • Anti bullying • Attendance 	
7	Matters for the attention of the Board / COAC	
7.1	No matters were raised for escalation to the board or COAC.	
8	AOB	
8.1	No further business was raised.	
8.2	Next meeting: 26 January 2026, 4.30pm in school.	

Actions Carried Forward:

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03.02.25 01	CB to consider introducing bar badges for library monitors. Update: The school is still looking at different roles children have in school. Ongoing	CB
22.09.25 01	The election for Vice Chair will carry over to the next meeting.	KF WH

The following link roles were confirmed:
Safeguarding – Lydia Mantle
SEND – Mike Eatwell
Disadvantaged (inc PP, LAC) and EDI – VACANT