



**Abbey Academy Council Meeting
Tuesday 18 March 2025 at 12:00
Abbey School**

Those Present:	Role	Initials
Louise Abbott	Support Staff Governor	LA
Wayne Askham	Head of School	WA
Janine Brullo	Parent Governor	JB
Niall Horstead	Staff Governor	NH
Dawn Jeffery	Parent Governor	DJ
Rachael Kent	Parent Governor	RK
Nicola Morris	Governor	NM
Ian Tankard	Chair	IT
Luci Windle	Executive Headteacher – via Teams	LW
Also Present:		
Rebecca Horne	Governance Clerk	CLERK
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO	JH
Apologies:		

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
1.1. To receive apologies for absence	

None.	
1.2. To accept apologies for absence	
None.	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered.	
None.	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
3.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda	
DW declared that she is now linked to Mental Health and Wellbeing.	
4. ABBEY SCHOOL ACADEMY COUNCIL MINUTES	
4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2024 were approved as a true record with no amendments.	
4.2. Review of Action Tracker The outstanding actions on the action tracker were reviewed and updated.	
4.2 JH requested the cheat sheet for Governors but this has not yet been seen by members.	
4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes	
None.	
5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
5.1 Headteacher Report LW provided an overview of the Headteacher's Report, while WA presented key information on the screen. The school place numbers are still very stable. It was highlighted that staffing changes will take effect from Easter. LW explained that a teacher will be joining from Horizon to provide cover. Additionally, a student teacher from Lotus Academy joined the school in January.	

Leadership & Management

LW explained that the planned attendance hub has not come to fruition due to a change in Government policy.

WA reported that two members of staff have submitted their Evidence-Informed Practice Charter assignments, and both have successfully passed.

LW stated that Playponics is a project being run in collaboration with Sheffield University. The Department for Education (DfE) visited to assess its progress.

LW explained that the toilet block in the lower school is being revamped as it requires significant development.

Sickness Absence Data

LW reported sickness absence in the school remains good and no concerns.

In relation to staff sickness, part-time staff sickness is an issue.

IT – In terms of the 413 days of sickness, is this more pregnancy related absence? WA confirmed there are few members of staff that are on long term sickness.

Quality of Education

LW informed the members that the school has loaned a maths specialist to Discovery Academy to support them during a maternity leave.

LW explained that the school has a new Speech and Language therapist who is working closely with the English Lead to develop communication profiles. The school still uses the NHS to deliver this service, currently on a half-day offer per-week basis, with the school funding an additional day. This works really well due to the consistency of having the same person.

IT – I feel for us as Governors it would be useful for us to have a better understanding of communication. LW – It covers both areas including oracy.

WA explained that the children who have previously received speech and language therapy, and have since been discharged, have had a communication profile created.

LW reported that the post-16 curriculum has been reviewed in line with staff changes, ensuring that the school has a planned enrichment offer that is relevant and progressive for all pupils.

LW emphasised that the school is offering an improved qualification package and exploring alternatives to BTECs, with a focus on T Levels.

Pupil Engagement in Learning

LW highlighted that Physical Education (PE) is the strongest subject in terms of student outcomes, followed by English and Science.

LW is really pleased with the progress in Maths, as mock exam results are showing that more students are getting closer to their target grade boundaries. Additionally, it seems that this year, the students have also banked more qualifications than ever.

LW highlighted the Calm App has been a great success at the school, with both staff and targeted families benefiting from it.

LW stated Music therapy continues to show more impact than Art therapy, however an impact report for Art therapy has been requested due to this being expensive and targeted on very few children.

LW highlighted an initiative funded by the Sports Premium that involves fencing as an activity for pupils. This has proven really positive.

DJ – Do you have any photos or videos? LW discussed a report that is created which includes images.

LW explained that the investment in the sports sanctuaries outside the building has shown an impact in reducing some pupils disengaged behaviour.

Behaviour and Attitudes

LW provided an update on a behaviour audit conducted by Joanne Cliffe from Nexus MAT, and the results of the audit were positive. This was included in the papers for the meeting.

LW provided a positive update on a recent learning walk at the school, noting that the majority of students were fully engaged, with only one child not engaged.

IT – Are there any systems in place for the one child that was dysregulated?

LW explained that systems are already in place to support all students, particularly those showing signs of emotional or behavioural challenges. The school uses the CPOMS system to monitor student wellbeing and behaviour. Using a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) Rating System, students are categorised based on their current levels of engagement, behaviour, and emotional wellbeing.

LW shared that the school uses a computer system to track students' online activity, which helps to identify disengaged behaviour.

Attendance Data

LW reported the school's attendance is slightly below average but no significant concerns have been noted. A small number of children have severe absence due to medical reasons.

WA provided additional context in relation to absence, explaining that some absences are linked to transport issues.

Personal Development

LW reported that pupil voice remains strong within the school. Pupils have had significant input into the end of term events.

The school website has been updated to reflect the work of the pupils do within school. On the website are the latest results of the pupil voice; **Abbey School – Our Gold Antibullying Award.**

IT emphasised the importance of personal development and communication in allowing students to express themselves, and how the events held at the school have a positive impact. By participating in these events, students gain valuable experiences that help them connect with peers, build self-confidence, and explore their creativity and talents.

LW explained that careers education is a real strength within the school. Sheffield Local Authority (LA) is actively working with the school to ensure that career education is effectively incorporated across various subjects and key stages. WA added that detailed information about the careers program is available on the school's website.

LW stated it may be worth looking at children who have gone onto employment and look at some data.

Community Voice Report

LW explained that The Family Group continues to receive support from Governors. A family coffee morning on e-safety was attended by some families, but participation remained limited. Concerns were raised that online safety issues are not reaching the families who need them most. Governors discussed ways to improve engagement with families. Seesaw communication remains strong.

LW explained that the school has removed its Twitter account and is transitioning to BlueSky. IT stated the transition from Twitter to BlueSky has been managed really well.

The school will continue to publish Friday Feelings on Seesaw.

Following the discussions regarding E-Safety, it was decided that LW will send out E-Safety posters to JB to ensure awareness and understanding of online safety measures. **Action - LW is to email the E-Safety posters to JB.**

LW stated both the Chinese New Year event and the dance festival were successful and well-received.

LW
15/07/25

<p>WA explained that the refreshed school website is now much easier for families to navigate and find information about the school. The site is more accessible and includes a new section dedicated to mental health support, covering areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worry Club • Abbey's Men's Club • Listen Up Cards <p>WA highlighted that the website now includes numerous links to general mental health resources for families who may be struggling.</p> <p>IT enquired about the support networks the school has in place from a Trust perspective to address the types of abuse encountered in school.</p> <p>JH explained that Headteachers are supported by Executive Regional Leads, who would be the first point of contact in such situations.</p> <p>JH further elaborated that various initiatives have been introduced, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Space – a forum where Headteachers meet to discuss challenges and support one another. • Nexus Employee Assistance Programme – available to all Nexus employees, offering services such as counselling. • Mental Health Audit Tool – a resource to assess and improve mental health support. <p>JH emphasised that Headteachers facing difficulties have multiple support options available.</p> <p><u>Overall Effectiveness and Looking to the next Headteacher's Report</u></p> <p>LW explained that the school is expecting an Ofsted inspection, as they are within the window for the notification call.</p> <p>5.1.1 Appendix 1 – Updated SIP</p> <p>This was circulated for information.</p> <p>5.1.2 Appendix 2 – Updated SEF</p> <p>This was circulated for information.</p>	
<p>5.2. School Dashboard Summary</p> <p>A Dashboard document was provided for information, and a brief overview was given during the meeting.</p>	

<p>No significant issues were reported, with all areas performing at a good level or better. LW continues to review the Dashboard regularly with Claire Garbutt at Nexus.</p> <p>IT recommended that Clare Garbutt provide a brief summary of key findings for each section. Additionally, it was suggested that Claire attend the summer Academy Council meeting. Action: WA to speak to CG. Clerking Services to invite Claire Garbutt to the summer Academy Council meeting to discuss the Dashboard.</p>	<p>WA/Clerking Services 15/07/25</p>
<p>5.3. Budget Report</p> <p>LW explained that the school has a slight surplus this year but is keeping it under £150k.</p> <p>LW noted that staffing percentages at the school are slightly low, however Nexus bank staff has improved.</p> <p>It was highlighted that a Governor should be allocated to attend budget meetings. It was agreed that NM will attend these meetings, which are held online. Action: LW to send a calendar invites to NM for the budget meeting.</p>	<p>LW 15/07/25</p>
<p>5.4. School Calendar</p> <p>This was circulated for information.</p> <p>School calendar dates have replicated Discovery Academy.</p>	
<p>5.5 Cabinet Member & MPs' Feedback from Pupil Parliament</p> <p>LW explained a newsletter has been sent out in relation to Pupil Parliament.</p>	
<p>5.6 Skills Audit</p> <p>The Governors were reminded of the deadline to complete the Annual Skills Audit is two weeks after the meeting. The form can be downloaded from GovernorHub but clerking services will be emailing and editable copy to the cohort.</p>	
<p>6. TRUST MATTERS</p>	
<p>6.1 Trust Verbal Update of Key Issues</p>	

<p>JH stated that Nexus is developing a couple of hubs within mainstream schools, set to launch in September.</p> <p>JH provided an update on Nexus MAT, noting the addition of two new schools: Bents Green and Seven Hills. There is also potential for collaboration with HHELC, a Nottingham Hospital School, starting in September 2025.</p> <p>JH highlighted efforts to develop the Nexus bank staff due to high demand. They are actively advertising and recruiting to expand the workforce.</p> <p>JH reported that Nexus recently won the MAT Association award for Specialist MAT of the Year.</p>	
7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>7.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair</p> <p>None.</p>	
8. CONFIDENTIALITY & RISK	
<p>8.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>None.</p>	
10. DATES OF NEXT MEETING	

Tuesday 15 July 2025	12:00 – 14:00	Abbey School
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Minutes approved

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE