KING'S OAK ACADEMY
Academy Council Meeting
Tuesday 31 March 2026 – 4.00pm

AC Members	Role	Attended/Apologies
Diane Owen (DOn)	Sponsor 1	**Y**
Gary Pine (GPe)	Sponsor 2**(Chair)**	**Y**
VACANCY	Sponsor 3	**N/A**
Liz Gregory (LGy)	Sponsor 4	**A**
Gokul Murali	Sponsor 5	**Y**
Deda Odutola (DOa)	Parent Councillor	**Y**
Sabrina Marie-Anais (SMa)	Staff Councillor	**Y**
Anthony Wilkinson (AWn)	Teacher Councillor	**Y**
Tamasyn Russell (TRu)	Parent Councillor	**Y**
Additional attendees		
Katherine Ogden (KOn)	Principal	**Y**
Ellen Montgomery (EMo)	Assistant Principal; Head of Lower School	**Y**
Andrew Marshall-Aherne (AM-A)	Assistant Principal - Head of Upper School	**Y**
Phil Spring (PSp)	Associate Assistant Principal - All Through Literacy	**Y**
James Cornick (JCo)	Associate Assistant Principal - Community Health & Partnerships	**Y**
Steve Taylor (ST)	CEO	**Y**
Michael Diggle (MDe)	Student Advocate	**Y**
Wendy Hellin (WHn)	Clerk	**A**

ACTIONS BROUGHT FORWARD

Date and No	Relates to item	Action	Owner
18.06.25 01	6.5	Next year the AC will identify the type of child to receive a case study for. Academy Councillors will consider who that may be once the summer outcomes are known. **Now business as usual – action closed.**	ALL
14.10.25 02	4.2	GPe will convert the link roles document into a visit checklist. **Closed**	GPe
27.01.26 01	4.1	Full update/report on councillor vacancy to be provided to the next meeting **Complete – closed.**	WHn
27.01.26 02	5.3.1	Update to be provided to the next meeting to follow up on how the lowest attaining pupils are improving. **On agenda - closed**	Emy
27.01.26 03	5.3.10	Focus on outcomes at next meeting, particularly basics and science outcomes. **On agenda – closed**.	JCk
27.01.26 04	5.4.4	**C**ase study/deep dive on impact of flexible/adjusted timetables and update to be provided to the next meeting. **No longer required - closed.**	Kon/AMA
27.01.26 05	5.6.1	Update/Review on Safeguarding Team to be provided to the next meeting. **Complete**	KOn
27.01.26 06	6.2	Behaviour Policy to be shared with the council for review/marking as signed on Gov Hub **Complete**	KOn
27.01.26 07	7.3	In the absence of the usual clerk, the principal will update staff members after the meeting to confirm their subcommittee role for 2025-26. **Complete**	KOn

1	Introduction, Administration & Apologies	Action
1.1	GPe welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from LGy and WHn and are recorded above.	
2	Declarations of Interest	

2.1	No new declarations were made.	
3	**Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**	
3.1	The minutes from the previous meeting (27 January 2026) were approved subject to amending the detail to show that Gary Pine is now COAC.	
3.2	A number of historic action items have built up across previous meetings. Outdated or business as usual items will be cleared so that only relevant, current actions are carried forward. The action table above has been updated and actions to be carried forward are shown in the table at the foot of the minutes.	
4	**Governance and COAC Update**	
4.1	**Recruitment** There is one remaining parent vacancy. Plans for recruitment include putting a notice in the newsletter and speaking with parents at the gate and at coffee mornings. It was confirmed that former staff member Ellie Doyle has expressed an interest in joining; KOn will progress this, subject to confirming Academy Council vacancies with WHn; it was confirmed that, as an all-through provision, there is scope to have 6 sponsor Councillors rather than 5. **ACTION: KOn will speak with WHn regarding Ellie Doyle joining the AC.**	KOn
4.2	**Feedback from the Chairs of Academy Council meeting** GPe provided the following updates from the most recent COAC meeting: • There is a trust wide Academy Councillor recruitment drive underway. • The need for Councillors to attend training for Exclusions and Suspensions was highlighted. • There was a data protection update provided, including detail around the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy • Councillors were reminded to keep academy-related communication within the GovernorHub platform to maintain GDPR compliance and avoid fragmented communication channels. • Governor Hub extended features were discussed, including the ability to record site visits. • The extended CLF Executive Team now includes performance coaches, and the remit of the team has widened. • An update on trust-wide careers work was provided. DOa confirmed she was happy to remain the Link Councillor for Careers. KOn confirmed that Careers at KOA is led by Kelly Smith, and Craig Jordan leads Careers trust-wide.	
5	**Academy Council Report – Questions from Academy Councillors**	
5.1	Raising Attainment and Outcomes	
5.1.1	KOn noted that Term 4 is always a demanding point in the year and explained that this meeting would focus heavily on raising attainment and reviewing progress across the school. Staff are working hard to maintain expectations and secure academic outcomes.	
5.1.2	There are encouraging developments in maths, particularly improvements shown in the recent MTC data, where gaps for disadvantaged pupils have begun to close.	
5.1.3	Positive signs are also emerging in Year 6, with mock data showing encouraging trends. Staff are focused on ensuring every lesson and intervention minute counts as pupils approach key assessments.	
5.1.4	KOn then issued some caution around the Year 11 headline data. The headline basics measure in English and Maths has not improved as expected, and current projections suggest outcomes may fall below last year's results. In response, timetables have been restructured to increase maths teaching time, and additional interventions are being put in place to support pupils on the Grade 3/4 borderline, where even small numbers of conversions have a significant impact on headline results. English performance is slightly more positive, but the main concern remains pupils who are secure in only one of the two basics subjects.	
5.1.5	Although the basics remain the priority, KOn noted positive tracking in other areas, including MFL, Sport and Hospitality. Combined Science remains a significant challenge, with projections broadly in line with last year. Humanities outcomes dipped at Term 4, but subject leads believe this reflects the difficulty of the most recent assessment rather than a true decline in learning.	
5.1.6	Behaviour updates are included within the Academy Council report, summarising strengths and areas for continued development.	

5.1.7	KOn then provided staffing updates, noting that despite some movement, overall team stability remains strong. Upcoming reception numbers will guide decisions on class structures for next year given the falling roll. KOn emphasised that, despite the changes, leadership capacity remains strong and the school has been able to reorganise or recruit quickly, ensuring that teaching and learning remain well supported.	
5.2	**Student Outcomes Middle School- Phil Spring (PSg)**	
5.2.1	PSg reported that the interventions introduced over the past academic year are having a measurable impact on pupil outcomes. Analysis of the most recent data shows that pupils who regularly attend weekly literacy and numeracy intervention sessions are now beginning to convert towards expected standards, contributing to a steady improvement in overall scores. These interventions will continue, with a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils and the identified group of 14 marginal pupils who are within five scaled-score points of achieving the expected standard.	
5.2.2	PSg described the ongoing review process in which intervention leaders assess the suitability and impact of each intervention and make adjustments when a pupil either no longer requires additional support or is not benefiting from the approach.	
5.2.3	Additional combined intervention groups continue to provide priority access for targeted pupils. This term, in preparation for the fourth mock SATs cycle, the academy has also introduced after-school booster groups in reading and maths on Mondays and Thursdays. Although these sessions initially targeted selected pupils with parental consent, many other pupils asked to join, demonstrating strong engagement. Some pupils already working at the expected standard have also been included to support their progression towards greater depth.	
5.2.4	PSg outlined an early-intervention approach that uses historic data to anticipate where pupils may be at risk of a wobble or where attendance or prior gaps may impact progress. This proactive strategy aims to prevent issues escalating into crisis points.	
5.2.5	PSg described the changes to the structure of the mock SATs assessments. While the first three mock cycles were delivered in a low-stakes format, mock 4 was run in the same format as the final SATs, with two maths papers scheduled on the same day and all papers completed within a four-day window. Daily mock SATs breakfasts were provided to help pupils feel calm, prepared, and familiar with the assessment process. This approach is intended to reduce anxiety and ensure no aspect of the formal testing experience feels unfamiliar when the real assessments take place. Phil noted that the team anticipates a dip in pupil focus over the Easter break. To mitigate this, a series of low-stakes, in-class mini-mock assessments will take place in week two of Term 5. These will be self-marked and conducted without access arrangements to maintain familiarity with SATs-style papers without adding pressure.	
5.2.6	Intervention lists have been refreshed for Term 5, with updated pupil priorities circulated to staff.	
5.2.7	**Questions from Academy Councillors**	
5.2.8	**How are reading interventions being delivered, and how is pupil wellbeing being monitored during this period of increased assessment?**	
5.2.9	Reading interventions run throughout the week during the school day, and there are also booster sessions after school. My role is not just data-driven; I regularly speak with pupils to understand how they are feeling about the papers. Feedback being received from pupils at KOA is that they are not feely unduly stressed about the exams, and class teachers are not reporting undue pressure in classrooms, though a small number of parents have expressed concerns.	
5.2.10	**What is the current combined percentage for reading, writing and maths, and is the target of 85% for combined outcomes or individual subjects?**	
5.2.11	The current combined figure is 60%, and the target referred to relates to the combined measure. Converting the identified group of 14 marginal pupils would bring the school to approximately 88% combined.	
5.2.12	**How achievable is the combined target, and where are the remaining gaps?**	
5.2.13	Many of the pupils who are one element short of achieving the combined standard are missing the writing component. As writing is a teacher-assessed judgement, the school has greater control over this area. A substantial piece of work will take place after the SATs to assess each pupil's writing portfolio. Teachers will focus on targeted teaching—for example, ensuring pupils who are	

	otherwise secure but missing basic punctuation can meet the expected standard—while ensuring all data remains accurate and evidence-based.	
5.2.14	**How long does the school have to secure writing outcomes, and is there scope for pupils to achieve greater depth?**	
5.2.15	We have until early June to finalise writing judgements. Pupils who are already working at the expected standard will also be targeted to move towards greater depth, which strengthens their transition to secondary school and contributes to higher KS2 outcomes overall.	
5.3	**Lower School Outcomes – Ellen Montgomery (EMy)**	
5.3.1	EMy provided an update on preparations for the upcoming Year 1 phonics screening check and the Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) scheduled for Term 6. The shift back to single-year-group teaching in Years 1 and 2 earlier in the year has significantly supported pupils in receiving instruction more precisely matched to their stage of learning.	
5.3.2	Current projections indicate that 79% of Year 1 pupils are on track to meet the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Although this is lower than last year's exceptionally high result of 95%, the team remains confident that outcomes will be above the national average (81% last year), with a full term remaining to consolidate learning.	
5.3.3	The role of parental engagement was discussed, particularly around daily reading, in securing phonics outcomes. There are a series of strategies already in place to strengthen reading habits at home. The school expects children to read a minimum of four times a week, and this is reinforced through weekly checks of reading logs, celebration assemblies, and a reading-raffle incentive where pupils can win books and bookmarks.	
5.3.4	To further support reading, the lower school holds an Open Door Day in the second week of each term. This allows parents to view their child's work and includes reading or phonics sessions—particularly in Reception and Year 1—to model effective practice and support families who may find regular reading more challenging.	
5.3.5	For children who are not reading consistently at home and who are at risk of not meeting the phonics standard, additional end-of-day reading sessions are delivered by a teaching partner. Pupils read books matched to their phonics phase and receive flashcards, vocabulary lists and sound packs designed to reinforce the same learning at home.	
5.3.6	Ellen concluded the update by noting that these combined approaches are helping to target the pupils most in need of support and maintain progress toward strong phonics outcomes.	
5.3.7	**Questions from Academy Councillors**	
5.3.8	**What further support is being offered to help parents with phonics, especially those who may feel unsure about saying sounds correctly?**	
5.3.9	Staff have produced flashcards to target individual sound gaps and have also created videos of Year 1 pupils modelling all phonics sounds from each phase. These videos are available on the school website, and parents are being signposted to them to build confidence and ensure consistency in how sounds are practised at home.	
5.3.10	**You mentioned behavioural challenges in Year 1. What is the nature of these challenges, how many pupils are affected, and what measures are in place?**	
5.3.11	There are two pupils who experience dysregulation at different points during the day. One child is being flagged for SEND assessment; the open-plan environment may be contributing to this pupil's difficulties. The second pupil tends to mimic this behaviour. Both children have personalised behaviour plans, and staff maintain strong communication with parents at the end of each day.	
5.3.12	**How are these pupils being supported to remain included in learning?**	
5.3.13	There are a range of tailored strategies, including starting the day with phonics outside the classroom, allocating morning responsibilities such as delivering fruit to build routine and confidence, and providing short movement breaks or brief learning sessions outside the classroom. These approaches help pupils reset and re-enter class successfully. Staff are mindful not to remove them from learning for long periods, ensuring both educational access and social integration are maintained.	
5.3.14	**Is wider classroom learning being disrupted by these behaviours?**	

5.3.15	While some disruption does occur, the rest of the class has shown strong resilience and maintains focus during incidents. The cohort continues to engage positively with learning, and the impact on overall class progress is minimal.	
5.4	**Upper School Outcomes – James Cornick (JCk)**	
5.4.1	In terms of upper school outcomes, it was acknowledged that although there are some positive indicators in individual subjects, overall progress in the upper school remains below the level required at this stage, and significant work is needed in the remaining weeks before examinations.	
5.4.2	Current data shows that while subjects such as French, Sport, and Hospitality are performing well, outcomes in science and several other components of Bucket 2 are not yet where they need to be. The fundamentals of the basics measure remain the biggest concern and require the most urgent focus.	
5.4.3	A group of 15 priority pupils, largely disadvantaged (PP) students, has been identified as the most crucial for improving the school's basics headline. JCk estimated that converting these pupils to achieve the expected standard could raise the basics measure by approximately 10–11 percentage points. As a result, intensive intervention planning has been put in place around this group.	
5.4.4	A comprehensive package of support is being implemented, including revision timetables, targeted revision materials, and one-to-one meetings following each holiday period. For pupils without an appropriate study environment at home, the school will provide a desk, chair and stationery to ensure they can revise effectively. Staff are being fully briefed so that all teachers understand the priority status of the identified pupils and their role in supporting them.	
5.4.5	While the immediate focus is necessarily on Year 11, JCk emphasised the importance of avoiding a cycle of constant firefighting. To prevent this pattern in future years, work is now underway to strengthen the Key Stage 3 curriculum, particularly in Year 9 with the aim to reduce the need for intense intervention at the end of Key Stage 4.	
5.4.6	Although the current outcomes position is disappointing, the team is encouraged by the clarity of the plan and the commitment to both immediate and longer-term improvement. There is shared recognition that the situation requires an all-in approach, and leaders remain focused on driving progress over the coming weeks.	
5.4.7	**Did the school anticipate the position Year 11 now finds itself in?**	
5.4.8	Early improvements seen in Mock 1 gave a false sense of optimism. Children showed an early lift in performance compared with previous cohorts, which suggested a stronger trajectory. However, in subsequent assessment, particularly in maths, pupils did not convert as expected. This has contributed to the disappointing overall position at this stage.	
5.4.9	**What are the key factors behind the underperformance in maths?**	
5.4.10	Some fundamental elements of mathematical knowledge have not been secure for this cohort. Recent work has revealed gaps in core concepts that should have been embedded earlier in the school journey. This is a critical learning point for us, and has highlighted that the existing approach, such as relying solely on the 100-day teacher plan and after-school interventions, is no longer sufficient to achieve the level of improvement required.	
5.4.11	**What immediate actions are being taken to address the gaps?**	
5.4.12	We continue to consider the balance between high-impact and high-disruption interventions. Options include rethinking groupings, lesson-by-lesson plans, and using the timetable more flexibly to get stronger maths teaching in front of the right pupils. Some interventions involve temporarily rearranging teaching staff to ensure the best practitioner is teaching the most vulnerable content. While disruptive, these changes are being carefully managed and justified by the gains needed in the limited time remaining.	
5.4.13	**How is lesson planning and curriculum sequencing being used to improve outcomes?**	
5.4.14	We are using Question-Level Analysis (QLA) to identify the specific areas where pupils are struggling and then planning targeted reteach sessions. We are reviewing the timetable weekly to maximise opportunities for high-impact teaching rather than independent revision tasks. This approach reflects the urgency of the current time window before examinations.	
5.4.15	**With the focus on Year 11, how is the school safeguarding improvements for future cohorts?**	

5.4.16	We understand the importance of avoiding a cycle of annual firefighting. Work is now underway to build a stronger Key Stage 3 curriculum, ensuring pupils enter Key Stage 4 with firmer foundations. This includes identifying the most important concepts in Year 9 and ensuring they are clearly mapped to Key Stage 4 expectations. The overall quality of curriculum delivery improves the further down the school you go, meaning younger cohorts are already receiving stronger provision than the current Year 11 did.	
5.4.17	**Do we understand why younger cohorts are tracking higher than current Year 11?**	
5.4.18	Yes. Improvements in curriculum planning, teaching quality, and learning exposure have been introduced gradually over recent years. As a result, pupils currently in Years 7 and 8 have benefited from a better educational diet than the current Year 11 cohort did in earlier years. The gaps now identified in Year 11 stem from historic inconsistencies that the school is actively addressing.	
5.4.19	**How will Term 6 and beyond be used to strengthen long-term teaching?**	
5.4.20	Senior leaders, including curriculum leads and external partners such as Chris Baker, are working with staff on improving long-term curriculum design and teaching. There will be a strong focus on raising expectations of what children can achieve, improving planning, and ensuring that teaching over time is of consistently high quality. The school aims to reach a point where Year 11 outcomes rely less on last-minute intervention and more on strong teaching throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.	
5.5	**SEND**	
5.5.1	LRe provided an overview of the current picture across the academy. At present, 22% of pupils are on the SEND register, with 2.97% holding an EHCP, slightly below the national average of approximately 4%. It was noted that in this setting, a number of pupils transition off the register over time as their needs are met.	
5.5.2	The primary needs profile shows a predominance of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties. It was highlighted that national research links untreated early speech and language difficulties with later SEMH needs in secondary school, reinforcing the importance of effective early intervention.	
5.5.3	Over the past four years, the academy has significantly strengthened its SEND provision. A wide range of targeted interventions is now established and running regularly across all areas of need. Staff commitment was identified as a major strength; teams act quickly, implement strategies consistently, and show high levels of care for pupils with SEND. Relationships with families have improved considerably, with communication now described as smoother and more constructive than in previous years.	
5.5.4	The introduction of updated SEND passports and structured review points three times per year—shared between tutors, Heads of Year and the SENDCo—has enhanced staff understanding of individual needs and improved the implementation of strategies in classrooms. These reviews have also strengthened communication with families.	
5.5.5	LRe noted that increased time in classrooms for observations, coaching and feedback would further enhance teaching and support, though current capacity limits this. Speech and language provision remains an area requiring further work, particularly in light of proposed national reforms. The government's SEND and AP Improvement Plan anticipates shifts toward: • greater use of individual support plans • clearer tiers of provision (universal, targeted, and specialist) • the development of inclusion bases within schools • increased funding for in-school SLCN and EP support • a fast-track assessment route for early-identified pupils moving from nursery into Reception While improved access to specialists is promised nationally, LRe expressed some uncertainty about how this will materialise in practice.	
5.5.6	LRe confirmed that handover arrangements are in place, with a colleague preparing to take over from October, following her departure from the academy. A full transfer of information on pupil needs is underway to ensure continuity and prevent any gaps in provision.	
5.5.7	GPe thanked LRe on behalf of the Academy Council for her commitment and dedication in supporting SEND students and families during her time at KOA.	
5.6	**Attendance**	

5.6.1	AMA presented an overview of attendance, noting that overall attendance remains challenging and broadly mirrors national trends, with no significant improvement across the year. Persistent absence remains a concern, and although there are pockets of improvement, the academy continues to work against a challenging national backdrop.	
5.6.2	Primary attendance is currently more stable than secondary, averaging around 94%, which, while better, still falls short of historic primary expectations. Positively, persistent absence among primary pupils is decreasing, and attendance for pupil premium and SEND learners is showing signs of improvement.	
5.6.3	Secondary attendance, however, continues to sit approximately 2% lower than last year, though this is consistent with patterns seen across the CLF and nationally. AMA emphasised that disadvantaged and SEND attendance gaps remain key priorities.	
5.6.4	The academy continues to use the evolving Attendance Playbook, developed over the past 18 months, to test, refine and evaluate strategies. This year's focus is on identifying which strategies have the greatest impact and discontinuing those that are resource-heavy but ineffective. Attendance practice must be responsive to changing needs and trends throughout the year.	
5.6.5	Attendance work increasingly intersects with wellbeing, SEND and safeguarding, with a growing number of cases involving school avoidance rather than straightforward illness. AMA shared examples of complex cases requiring joint work with families, pastoral staff, and external partners. A recent case demonstrated a positive turnaround, with a long-term non-attender now planning to return following intensive multi-agency engagement.	
5.6.6	**Are primary and secondary attendance patterns different?**	
5.6.7	Primary attendance is stronger and more stable, averaging around 94%. Primary persistent absence is reducing. In contrast, secondary patterns remain more challenging and broadly unchanged this year.	
5.6.8	**What strategies are proving effective, and how is the school evaluating them?**	
5.6.9	The school is actively reviewing which approaches are producing measurable impact. Strategies that no longer add value are being reduced or removed. The Attendance Playbook is used to track, test and refine interventions in real time.	
5.6.10	**How is the school responding to increasing levels of school avoidance?**	
5.6.11	School avoidance is a growing national challenge reflected locally. Leaders engage intensively with families, personalise reintegration plans, and work alongside pastoral and SEND teams. One recent case discussed in the meeting now has a successful plan for re-entry following sustained support.	
5.6.12	**Is the attendance team sufficiently resourced?**	
5.6.13	Three core staff members lead attendance work (Attendance Lead, Pastoral Lead, and Attendance Admin), but AMA noted that attendance cannot be fixed by this small group alone. Strong relational work with families remains essential, and enforcement measures such as fines are only used where appropriate and likely to support re-engagement.	
5.6.14	**How is the school ensuring the attendance strategy remains dynamic?**	
5.6.15	The Attendance Playbook is intentionally a live document. It grows and adapts as the school tests strategies, identifies trends, and shifts resources toward high-impact approaches.	
5.7	**Safeguarding**	
5.7.1	Safeguarding updates are included in the AC report.	
6.	**Policies**	
6.1	The AC noted the following policies: • CLF SEND Policy • CLF Charging and Remissions Policy • CLF Complaints Policy	
7.	**Items for Board / COAC**	
7.1	No items for the board or COAC were raised.	
8.	**AOB**	
8.1	The new proposed date for the previously postponed committee meetings was confirmed as Tuesday 19 May, 2026 at 4.15pm online.	
8.2	No further business was reported. The meeting closed at 6.35pm	

ACTIONS CARRIED FORWARD:

Date and No	Relates to item	Action	Owner
31.03.26 01	4.1	KOn will speak with WHn regarding Ellie Doyle joining the AC.	KOn