



STAR MAT Board of Trustees

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at 5.30pm at Kirk Fenton CE Primary School

Present: Clare Thornton-Eckford (Chair), Nick Sheppard, Alison Smith, Peter Wilson, Frances Dodd, Simon Peacock, Richard Coy

In attendance:

Martyn Sibley (Chief Education Officer, STAR MAT)
 Melissa Boyes (Chief Operating Officer, STAR MAT)
 Deborah Hastie (Observer)
 Iain Tessier (Clerk, Governance Advisor – STAR MAT)

1.0 Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Tom Fielden. There were no declarations of interest.

2.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 24th September 2019

2.1 Resolved:

Trustees agreed that the minutes of the last meeting, held on 24th September 2019, were a true and accurate record of that meeting. The Chair was duly authorised to sign the minutes.

3.0 Action Points and Matters Arising

3.1

Action Points from the Meeting	Agenda Item
Circulate Business Interest form template	Completed. Certain forms remained outstanding. The Clerk to follow up on these.
Benchmarking exercise to ascertain acceptable level for cash reserves	To be dealt with at the December meeting
Read the revised AFH	Trustees confirmed they had read the revised AFH
Check whether warranty for works would be carried over to the Trust	A report had been circulated and the matter looked into further by Tom Fielden and Richard Coy. The issue should not delay the conversion.
Meet to agree processes for the ERC Prepare committee ToR	Matter carried over. The Clerk had circulated Terms of Reference to the Chair. It was noted that exec remuneration was now covered in the Pay policy.
Supplementary guidance for headteachers re: Appraisal policy	Completed.
Ensure Confidentiality policy was generic for STAR MAT	Completed.
Child Protection and Safeguarding policy to be published on STAR MAT website	Completed.
Consideration to be given to a secondment for a dedicated safeguarding lead	Item on agenda.

ACTION

Clerk

Agenda

Discuss levels of delegation to LGBs	This to be considered ahead of one of the December meetings.
Read the revised KCSIE guidance and notify the Clerk when done so	Trustees confirmed they had read the revised KCSIE guidance.
Clerk to make enquiries about delivery of a Trust-wide safeguarding training session.	Item on agenda.
Complete online NGA safeguarding training modules	Carried over. The Clerk to send a reminder to Trustees. The deadline to be the end of term.
Amendments to governor recruitment application form	Completed.
Trust policies to be communicated to LGBs	Completed.

CTE, MS
MB, Clerk

ALL

4.0 CEOs Report – Outcomes 2019

4.1 The CEO reminded Trustees of the need to ensure that standards remained a key focus area for the Board. The outcomes in every school and for every child were important. The documents circulated prior to the meeting were designed to give an impression of the overall picture across the Trust. All schools had been notified of their education risk register RAG rating.

4.2 Overall, KS1 was the weakest area across the Trust. The three-year trend data for Reading and Writing was not great. Maths was a better story – with an upward trend and above national averages for outcomes. Science was also above the national average but no upward trend. There were some real issues to resolve in some settings.

Debs Hastie entered the meeting.

4.3 KS2 revealed a better picture. Looking at the amalgamated data, STAR schools were above national for attainment and in line for progress. With regards the latter, the aspiration was of course to be better than that. The schools should be improving progress rates for pupils. A Trustee wanted to see the best practice in subject areas being rolled out across the Trust. This needed to happen more quickly. The CEO agreed with the point being made and plans were in place to address this, with details to be shared later in the meeting.

4.4 Primary Summary

4.4.1 Appleton Roebuck

One of the schools actually showing an upward trend in KS1. Attainment good in KS2, however, there was a slight downward trend in terms of progress at KS2. With the school having small cohorts, slight shifts in individual performances could move the data around quite a bit and thus context was everything. The CEO advised a watching brief.

4.4.2 Brayton

The CEO was confident about the leadership of the headteacher. Their data was improving in almost all areas and the school was clearly on a positive journey. They were a welcome addition to the Trust, although the CEO cautioned that the recovery job was more than halfway completed.

4.4.3 Kellington

The school had an interim head getting to grips with a community that posed several challenges. Permanent leadership arrangements needed to be decided upon shortly. The interim head was aware of the challenges from her time as a governor. Mr Yapp was performing a mentoring role, with further SIC support from Donna Kettle. The LGB needed capacity but had a strong chair and knowledgeable governors. KS1 was a real concern, all stemming from inadequate teaching. The head was addressing this. Leadership capacity was another major problem, with the MAT supporting the head to develop leadership. GLD was well below national but there really wasn't any

need for it to be. The upshot of poor GLD was that outcomes in KS1 were also poor. There were some 'green shoots' coming out from the 2019 KS1 outcomes data but the school was below national, with the exception of attainment for reading. The CEO noted that the latter was down to the significant work done by the English lead. There were improvements across KS2 but ultimately no upward trends. A slight negative on progress but nothing significant. Again, the school had some small cohorts so data could be skewed easily. Overall, concerns remained.

A Trustee asked about teaching in the rest of the school. The CEO talked about a young teaching staff that needed developing and this started with leadership development. Was there mentoring in place for teachers? The CEO said that this had not taken place yet because the interim head needed to fully assess the position and give the MAT a steer on what was needed.

Would a peer review be a good move? The CEO agreed and would look at options for the Spring term perhaps. Mr Yapp would want some input on this. A Trustee agreed with their colleague, a peer review would help sharpen priorities. Again, the CEO agreed but initially the head needed to be totally focussed on addressing inadequate teaching in EYFS and KS1.

Trustees could see from the LGB minutes that governors were asking the right sorts of questions.

What was attendance like now? This remained an issue but the figures were getting better. The CEO hoped that the Trust's consistent message around attendance/absence would have a real long-term impact in all the schools.

4.4.4 Kirk Fenton

KS1 was steadier now. The head had tackled some of the teaching issues. The mentor support from Mr Broom had been well received. Trustees commended the CEO and the head on a proactive approach. The CEO agreed that the substantial staffing changes had led to a more positive environment and had freshened up leadership, with new leaders identified. KS2 attainment data was above national. More telling was the upward trend in all areas except reading, which had plateaued.

Was this the result of good teaching in Y6? The CEO believed so.

Progress remained less positive due to legacy issues but the head believed that things were heading in the right direction, judging from the progress in the children's books. This assessment was underscored by the view of the SIC. Thus the CEO was not overly concerned about progress.

The CEO did feel that staff needed to better understand their level of accountability. A Trustee asked how so. The CEO gave an example whereby staff had to improve their knowledge of how they knew that certain initiatives had impacted on pupils. Taking the right action was important but so was the need to evaluate and articulate that evaluation. There were some encouraging signs on that front but there was work to be done.

Trustees noted the influence of the new chair in the recent LGB minutes.

4.4.5 Monk Fryston

Remained outstanding due to the hard work of the staff and head. Outcomes remained strong and there were no issues. Head now executive head over Monk Fryston and Saxton so Trustees would no doubt want to keep an eye on how things developed there. The school did have an excellent leadership team to support Mr Weights – in fact this was the opportunity to develop leadership structures across the schools. Saxton needed most support in improving its day-to-day systems. The CEO was asked whether there were any further strategic leadership decisions to consider re: Monk Fryston and Saxton. The CEO did not foresee any.

4.4.6 Saxton

In terms of results, Saxton could be considered the best performing school in the Trust. The KS2 teacher had delivered strong outcomes for children. The only slight concern was that EYFS data could be better.

4.4.7 Riverside

KS1 performance remained an issue. There had been a great deal of staffing turbulence in that phase to manage. The head had taken action swiftly and now felt that the staff team was the strongest he had assembled in all his time at the school. KS2 was showing upward trends. Maths outcomes were much improved. Progress was in line with national but leadership felt that it should be better than that. The head relished a challenge. Mr Yapp was well supported in terms of internal leadership, allowing him to perform mentoring roles elsewhere in the Trust.

4.4.8 Sherburn Hungate

KS1 outcomes were not as strong as they could be but teaching in the phase was good. The 2019 cohort was a weaker cohort in terms of attainment but progress was better – this was evident in the books. A Trustee questioned the conflicting RAG ratings. The CEO said that RAG was not entirely down to outcomes but also about the capacity for improvement. The CEO talked about a motivated head and staff. The school had moved forward tangibly. The school was still subject to high rates of pupil mobility/turbulence. LGB capacity and engagement had been flagged. There was a need to get more pupils to the greater depth standard but this was the part of the journey that would take time. The CEO felt that the school was on an excellent trajectory.

4.4.9 South Milford

On the face of the 2019 results, Trustees might register a slight concern. Outcomes in 2018 had been extraordinary but 2019 had seen outcomes revert to 2017 levels. Perhaps 2018 was the blip and 2017 and 2019 were reflective of the norm. If that was so then leadership would want to see data improve. Having said that, one always had to be mindful of a cohort's relative strength. There had been some teaching issues to tackle and the head had shown strong leadership on this. KS1 provision was superb, in contrast to other settings in the Trust. The CEO advised a watching brief.

4.4.10 A Trustee asked if there were any risks not touched upon in the CEOs assessments. Also, were there any to be particularly worried about from those listed? The Sherburn Hungate expansion had stalled. The 'federation' between Saxton and Monk Fryston could be a risk; one always had to be conscious of potential reputational risks. Middle leadership capacity across the Trust lacked depth. There were new/relatively new leadership arrangements in several schools. Governance capacity and governor succession planning were issues to be aware of for certain settings.

4.5 Secondary Summary

4.5.1 Sherburn High

The Head had navigated Y11 well. A risky decision in English in Y10 had backfired. Staffing turbulence had been dealt with. There was some quite marked subject performance variation. Maths was a very strong department, English less so. Maths results showed Sig+ for every cohort. This underlined the point that performance was driven by the culture. The Head was determined to improve English outcomes. The P8 score showed improvement and was now in line with national. However, the CEO felt there was a need to try and shift the general year-on-year position re: progress. It should be noted that the leadership team had sorted out the big issue relating to the school finances and they were in a much stronger position as a result of the actions taken.

TGS

Best KS4 results ever. 0.31 P8 score was above national average. Maths remained a strength. Ebacc very strong (Sig+). In English there was a big differential in the outcomes for boys vs girls. There were motivation and resilience issues to address with boys. The school also had a major issue around outcomes for disadvantaged students and this had been the case for some time. The

new head was acutely aware of the situation and was addressing it as a priority. In fairness, previous SLT had done a lot of work on this but unfortunately largely without impact. Investment in PP was strong but results were not showing improvement. The picture was better in that regard at SHS and therefore some good practice sharing was probably the way forward. The CEO was asked whether the heads were getting together to look at collaboration opportunities. The CEO said that they were on with this.

5.0 Kirk Fenton SIAMS Report

5.1 The school's SIAMS report had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no comments or questions. The Trustees wished to register their congratulations to the school on a successful inspection.

5.2 The CEO noted that the church effectiveness/distinctiveness group had met for the first time. They were putting together a strong development agenda. The Diocesan advisor had been present.

6.0 Review Trust Strategic Plan

Documents circulated prior to the meeting.

6.1 The CEO noted that the plan had been rolling for some time and it was the right time now to close this plan and move to the next phase of development. A final RAG rating had been applied. The CEO invited comments and questions.

6.1.1 A Trustee felt that, from all that they had seen and heard and given what had been talked about at the away day, the Trust did need to look at its strategic planning for investing in and improving SEND provision and outcomes. This was echoed by other Trustees. The CEO agreed for the need to create additional capacity and reassured Trustees that this area was covered in the new plan. The 'every child counts' mantra had to be delivered.

6.1.2 The CEO was asked about the investment in CPOMS. The CEO confirmed that this package would be available to schools post-Christmas and was being funded through the CSF.

6.1.3 A Trustee asked how the Trust was addressing the well-publicised issues around children's mental health. The CEO replied that the Trust had invested in the Just B service and this provided schools with access to counselling etc. The Chair wanted to see a permanent investment in such services. The CEO agreed and wanted to reach a point where Just B was a sustainable resource.

7.0 Approve Revised Trust Strategic Plan

Documents circulated prior to the meeting.

7.1 The CEO said that in formulating the new plan he had distilled the ideas discussed at the recent away day. The Heads had now been consulted on the plan too, specifically the three core statements and the major drivers to achieve them.

7.1.1 A Trustee asked about the heads reaction to the plans for curriculum development. The reaction had been very positive. The heads were very pleased to see investment in a co-ordinated, best practice approach and felt it was exactly what was needed. The heads also understood the need to build back-office capacity, to invest in safeguarding and well-being initiatives and to get the people strategy and the professional development offer right. There had been a big discussion on curriculum development and, in fact, the heads had wanted to move further and quicker and get development in place for all foundation subjects. Trustees welcomed the ambition, although caution was expressed about the timescales for completion.

7.2 A general discussion followed. Everyone was clear that plans had to consider and articulate what outcomes should look like for each year group. A Trustee wanted to know how teachers would be

selected for the working groups. The CEO had been clear that as well as being highly competent in their field, he wanted individuals that were motivated and positive about the opportunity on offer – team players who understood the Trust model. Would all schools be represented? The CEO confirmed that they would. Trustees were pleased to hear this. None of the development touched upon KS5, why was this? The CEO explained that KS4 and KS5 were heavily prescribed by the syllabi and hence the focus for now was years 1 to 9. Would the schools benefit from resource sharing? Yes they would. A Trustee was concerned that the work being done had some external verification process – after all you’d want to test whether you were likely to deliver the right outcomes for children. Quality assurance was important first up. The CEO acknowledged this as a fair point, one that he had not thought about. The CEO would look at an appropriate validation process in due course.

MS

7.3 A Trustee was concerned that there was not enough explicit detail on delivering improvement in KS1. Surely this was necessary if what the data was saying was true and after the CEOs summary earlier in the meeting. Again, the CEO agreed that this was a fair challenge. He went on to say that the Trust could be challenged in this area and in terms of provision for SEND and PP. The CEO would look at leadership and strategy development and bring back revisions in due course.

MS

7.4 **Resolved:**

Trustees approved the strategic plan as presented, noting that the CEO would be looking at further revisions in due course.

8.0 **People Strategy**

Essential reading highlighted prior to the meeting.

8.1 With reference to the proposals for two Trust level co-ordinator posts related to Safeguarding and SEND/vulnerable learners, the CEO explained that the MAT needed to create capacity for oversight of work in these areas, particularly with what tended to emanate from the heads group in terms of workload and initiatives to improve practices etc. Comments and questions were invited.

8.1.1 Did the proposal involve paying appointed individuals more money? No, this was about freeing up management time from their setting to provide that time to the MAT. There would be a cost in backfill of that time to the relevant school. The incentive was that this constituted an excellent leadership opportunity for the successful candidates. Leading from that, A Trustees asked if the Trust could afford the proposal. The CEO and COO believed so. The backfill costs for two people at one day a week was around £40k. Was one day a week sufficient for the roles to be fulfilled? The CEO believed that persons would be appointed for up to one day a week and thus Trustees were being asked to sanction appointments for up to one day a week. Operationally, they would decide what was actually initially sustainable.

8.2 **Resolved:**

Trustees approved the appointment of a Safeguarding co-ordinator post and a SEND/vulnerable learners post for up to one day a week.

8.3 The CEO had alluded to the potential need for a similar EYFS co-ordinator. The CEO said that he had wanted to move on this but the heads group had not seen this as a priority at this stage. However, the CEO felt that pedagogy in this area required development and oversight and therefore wanted to examine the matter further and bring back a proposal to a future meeting.

8.4 A Trustee was concerned that the approved roles have defined expectations and ‘deliverables’. The CEO agreed that these appointees had to be able to focus on strategic leadership and not simply add another level of ‘firefighting’ capacity – a knowledge resource as opposed to operational support for schools and leaders. The CEO agreed to draw up job specs for the roles.

MS

8.5 Workforce development and centralisation of certain functions had been talked about both at executive level and by Trustees at the away day. The CEO did not want to expand on matters further at this stage, pending a telephone conference that had been planned with the HR advisors in two weeks.

9.0 Brayton Conversion Update

9.1 The COO recapped the position as to why there had been a one month delay. A further survey following the first survey was required. NYCC had indicated that they couldn't move on matters until summer 2020. Essentially, the Trust had to take on the liability for anything that emerged from the second survey. Trustees that had read the first survey report indicated that there was nothing in its contents that indicated an undue risk – most schools had buildings issues to a lesser or greater extent and Brayton's were no more risky or complex than any of the other current MAT schools. The COO agreed and recommended that the Trust accept the risk and that the conversion be allowed to continue as planned for 1st November.

9.2 Resolved:

Trustees agreed that the Brayton conversion should continue as planned for 1st November and that liability for the second survey and its findings would rest with the Trust.

10.0 Governance Matters

10.1 Resolved:

Trustees approved the LGB structure and membership for Brayton CE Primary School as circulated prior to the meeting.

10.2 Resolved:

Trustees approved the appointments of the following Trust appointed governors:
Paul Graddon, Kellington LGB
Mike Buckley, Appleton Roebuck LGB

11.0 Governor Recruitment Strategy

11.1 The Governance Advisor was invited to summarise the output from the second meeting of the working group. The working group had looked at the induction process and agreed that the model previously used by Monk Fryston should be the basis for local induction. Certain references needed updating and the GA had been tasked with sorting that out. The group also looked at what Trust level induction should involve and how best to support improvements in governance more widely. Again, the conclusions from that discussion would be distilled into the induction handbook by the GA. The group then looked at options for evaluating both the quality of the application process for candidates and evaluating the impact on overall LGB governance of the induction process and the candidates put forward by the Trust Board. These evaluations would be delivered to Trustees on an annual basis.

12.0 Policy Review and Approval

12.1 Resolved:

Trustees approved the following policies, which had been circulated prior to the meeting:

- Safeguarding (further updates since policy approved at last meeting)
- SEND (unchanged)
- Health and Safety (unchanged apart from removal of the reference to the Estates Manager)
- Equalities (amendments put forward by an LGB were carried)
- Stakeholder Behaviour Protocol (amendment put forward by an LGB was carried)

12.2 The new Pay policy was now ready for consideration. EPM had provided their model policy, which had been consulted upon with the Unions. Trustees were also required to make a decision on the 2.75% general uplift for teachers.

Resolved:

Trustees approved the Pay policy, including the additional section on executive remuneration. Trustees agreed to the 2.75% general uplift for teachers. A Trustee raised a query about terminology in sections 2.10 and 2.17 of the policy. The CEO, COO and GA to discuss whether any further revisions to the policy were necessary.

**MS, MB,
Clerk**

12.3 The COO indicated that the DPO could provide a CCTV policy and potentially a document to cover the new policy requirement around Biometric Data. This would be looked at ahead of next meeting.

MB

12.4 With regards the Equalities policy, a Trustee felt that policy in this area could be improved further in terms of how references to gender were worded. The GA encouraged the Trustee and the CEO to discuss the matter further and propose further amendments as necessary.

FD, MS

13.0 Sustainability

13.1 Confidential item.

14.0 Safeguarding

14.1 With CYC unable to support an in-house safeguarding training session for Trustees (and governors), the CEO suggested that Cayte Mulhern from TGS be approached about delivering such a session. Trustees agreed. The CEO would action this and endeavour to set up a date in January.

MS

15.0 Health and Safety

15.1 The internal audit in this area was being conducted. Nothing further to report at this stage.

16.0 Items to be Delegated or Communicated to LGBs

16.1 Trustees noted the request to support facilitation of network meetings involving governors across the schools that shared the same monitoring responsibility (such as safeguarding and SEND). This was something that the new lead co-ordinators could support and, as such, the GA was asked to communicate this intention to the LGBs via heads and chairs.

Clerk

17.0 Any Other Agreed Business

17.1 Mr Wilson wished to thank Claire Earl for her organisation of his visit to TGS. Mr Wilson had enjoyed the opportunity to meet the new head, to have a tour of the school, to visit lessons and to have an audience with a panel of Y7 students. The visit had been very enjoyable and beneficial. The knowledge and professionalism of the staff had been clear to see. The audience with the Y7s had been eye-opening and hearing their candid views had been very useful.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 2nd December at 5.30pm at Monk Fryston

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

	Action Points from the Meeting	Agenda Item	Person(s) Responsible	Date for Delivery
1.	Chase outstanding Business Interest forms	3.1	Clerk	ASAP
2.	Discuss suitability of current Scheme of Delegation to LGBs	3.1	MS, CT-E, MB Clerk	December
3.	Complete online safeguarding training (Clerk to send reminder)	3.1	ALL	By end of term
4.	Validation process and quality assurance for curriculum development initiative	7.2	MS	Feedback in due course
5.	Address challenge on leadership and strategy plans for improving KS1 across the Trust	7.3	MS	January meeting
6.	Job specs for the new Trust co-ordinator roles	8.4	MS	January meeting
7.	Pay policy query on terminology	12.2	MS, MB, Clerk	As required
8.	Prepare CCTV and Biometric Data policies for approval	12.3	MB	December
9.	Possible further revisions to Equalities policy	12.4	FD, MS	Due course
10.	Approach Cayte Mulhern about delivering a MAT safeguarding training session	14.1	MS	For January
11.	Communicate intention to support group network meetings for governors with the same monitoring responsibility	16.1	Clerk	ASAP