

STAR MAT Board of Trustees Curriculum and Standards Committee (CASC) - Virtual

Minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2022 at 5.30pm,
using Google Meet

Present: Alison Smith (Chair) Nick Sheppard
Clare Thornton-Eckford

In attendance: Ian Yapp, CEO STAR MAT
Melissa Boyes, COO STAR MAT
Sam Vince (Clerk)

1.	<p><u>Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. All Trustees were present. There were no declarations of interest in regards to the items on this agenda.</p> <p>The CEO had provided a summary document for Trustees, given the large number of documents for this meeting (previously distributed) and it was agreed to review this report in each agenda item.</p> <p><u>Update on membership including SBJ</u></p> <p>It was confirmed by the CEO that a new Trustee was being appointed and governors agreed to a new governor being appointed at the school the Trustee had been sourced from to replace them.</p>							
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the full governing body meeting held on 11th November 2021 including confidential minutes – previously distributed</u></p> <p>The Trustees were in agreement that both sets of minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Trustees duly approved both sets of minutes.</p> <p>It was requested that a note be added to Decision Time for all meetings to state whether there was also a set of confidential minutes for approval.</p>	Clerk						
3.	<p><u>Action Plan and Matters Arising</u></p> <p>With reference to the Action Plan:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="177 1899 1386 2096"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="177 1899 256 1937"></th> <th data-bbox="256 1899 724 1937">Action</th> <th data-bbox="724 1899 1386 1937">Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="177 1937 256 2096">1.</td> <td data-bbox="256 1937 724 2096">Investigate possibility of SIC joining the committee and whether this could be part of their chargeable hours to the Trust</td> <td data-bbox="724 1937 1386 2096">Completed – the CEO confirmed the SIC could not be a member of the committee as they were a paid officer of the Trust. They could join as an advisor but it would need to be noted there was a conflict of</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Action	Status	1.	Investigate possibility of SIC joining the committee and whether this could be part of their chargeable hours to the Trust	Completed – the CEO confirmed the SIC could not be a member of the committee as they were a paid officer of the Trust. They could join as an advisor but it would need to be noted there was a conflict of	
	Action	Status						
1.	Investigate possibility of SIC joining the committee and whether this could be part of their chargeable hours to the Trust	Completed – the CEO confirmed the SIC could not be a member of the committee as they were a paid officer of the Trust. They could join as an advisor but it would need to be noted there was a conflict of						

		<p>interests on some items where they had supplied the reports. The SIC had been invited to attend the May meeting and Trustees confirmed they were happy to approve this way of working.</p>	
<p>Confidential minutes – no actions were recorded.</p>			
<p>Matters arising</p>			
<p>None were raised.</p>			
<p>4.</p>	<p>Continuing Conversations – previously distributed</p> <p>Full reports for each setting (from December) had been circulated prior to the meeting. The CEO provided a summary of the position of each of the schools from a school improvement and governance perspective.</p> <p>He highlighted that staff well-being continued to be a pertinent theme, with work continuing to be focused on both staff and student well-being. All schools had been asked to complete a questionnaire to confirm what they were doing to support students and the intention was to develop a strategy based on this feedback. An updated well-being charter would also be developed which was more visual than the current version, taking into account the DfE staff well-being charter and implications at organisational levels. This was welcomed by the Trustees.</p> <p>He also confirmed that data was beginning to be used more effectively in some schools but more work was needed with schools and governors and staff training was required to ensure assessment processes were robust and moderated. Schools also needed to ensure that books were regularly reviewed. The CEO was actioned with notifying all Trustees when documents were updated in their link Trustee folders and to reiterate they should be reviewing these regularly.</p> <p><i>A Trustee questioned if the MAT training day focused on well-being would be re-arranged (it had been cancelled due to Covid).</i></p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the next MAT wide training day would not be for some time but in the interim, every school had been tasked with having structured conversations regarding well-being. Trustees noted that staff engagement was key to understanding what staff wanted and needed and agreed the MAT could impact on areas such as workload, training and counselling but personal and lifestyle choices such as yoga would be the personal responsibility of staff.</p>		<p>CEO</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Attendance report – previously distributed</p> <p>5.1 Absence Data Spring 2022</p> <p>5.2 Attendance and Safeguarding</p> <p>5.3 Schools must publish improvement plans in attendance crackdown</p> <p>The CEO noted priority needed to be given to attendance and student progress and that given the government consultation, there may be a requirement to have a Trust wide policy on student attendance and when absences were authorised. He noted a working group was planned for next term to look at this in more detail and he had instructed LGBs that they needed to ensure they understood their data with either the link governor or a working group to look at it in detail.</p> <p><i>A Trustee suggested the Trust should consider adjusting school holidays as other Trusts had done, as there was a big issue with parents taking students out of school during term time to go on holiday as they could not afford to go in the school holidays. They queried whether there was any research to confirm if this impacted attendance positively.</i></p> <p>The CEO suggested consideration of this should wait until the government consultation had been completed as it was likely there would be a tightening of fines and approvals for absence. He noted the Trust would have to undergo a consultation if changing school holidays was to be considered</p>		

	<p>and neighbouring Local Authority dates would have to be taken into account for parents with students at multiple schools.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Student Data including progress and attainment trends</u> – previously distributed</p> <p>6.1 Primary Autumn data – MAT format</p> <p>The CEO confirmed to Trustees that the data was from December and the next set of data would be available just before Easter. Reading fluency and stamina and writing were consistent areas for development across all of the schools. Some pastoral issues had also been noted as students weren't used to focusing for long periods and developing relationships with other children, due to Covid and extended periods at home.</p> <p><i>A Trustee asked whether this data was from Puma and Pira assessments.</i></p> <p>It was confirmed that for the past two years data had been as a result of teacher assessments which had been informed by Puma and Pira.</p> <p>The Trust pilot primary assessment programme would be finalised and evaluated in the summer term with the aim to ensure teacher assessment was robust and consistent. Standardised tests are also used for gap analysis. Plug in software called Shine had also been purchased to highlight gaps and provide relevant interventions with the resources needed to support them for all Trust primary schools.</p> <p><i>A Trustee queried whether the intention of the Trust was to continue using Puma and Pira.</i></p> <p>The CEO confirmed they would as these standardised tests were the only national comparators they had. However it was essential the data was used well to inform tracking points and diagnostics used to show where teaching not been as effective or where items needed to be reinforced. He confirmed they needed to review how data was reported and evaluated and whether to use the same number of tracking points across the year for all year groups with the intention being to have a consistent method across the Trust.</p> <p><i>A Trustee noted the key themes which had been identified across the Trust and challenged whether those schools who were performing better were sharing what was working well. They also asked what assurances there were that the phonics systems in place were working well and whether schools had looked at new approaches to writing. They also asked whether schools were managing these areas individually or whether it was centralised.</i></p> <p>The CEO recognised that there had not been a lot of sharing of best practice during the pandemic and a working group was planned to focus on the love of reading and reading development, with writing also being considered.</p> <p><i>A Trustee stated that the Trustees needed reassurance that the approaches and phonics systems in place would deliver.</i></p> <p>It was agreed that the CEO would ask the School Improvement Officer to provide an update for Trustees on getting phonics right and the commonalities across schools.</p> <p>6.2 Secondary data</p> <p>It was noted the two high schools used different systems for target setting and evaluation but they were moving towards using FFT tracker and analytics as soon as it was available which would mean they were using a common evaluation system.</p> <p><i>A Trustee asked what issue had prevented them using the same system until now.</i></p>	CEO Agenda - CASC

	<p>It was explained that both schools had worked with a system which suited them individually until this point and there had also been some contractual issues with one of the providers. Work was continuing with FFT on a common system.</p> <p>6.3 DfE Inspection Dashboard summary reports</p> <p>The CEO explained to Trustees that the data was from the 2019/20 academic year (re-published Autumn 2021) and Ofsted inspectors weren't focusing much on data given there had been no official data available since then. He noted however it was still important for governors to understand this data and it would be discussed in the Chair of Governors forum with the CEO challenging them and the Headteachers on their attendance and behaviour data. Absence was linked to a safeguarding risk in that if a child was not in school, how did school know they were safe?</p>	
7.	<p><u>Risk register & Support plans</u> – previously distributed</p> <p>7.1 Education Risk register</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that updates from the spring term had been added, with no real change for the High schools.</p> <p>A school had been shown as amber given there was a new Headteacher in post, with a formal review scheduled for 3rd March to assess whether a support plan was required. Governance had been strengthened and good challenge was in evidence.</p> <p>Another school had moved to red for governance. Although the position on teaching and learning had been strengthened, the Headteacher had resigned and the Trust needed to understand how it could support the school. A recruitment panel was in place and an appropriate model for executive leadership was being investigated.</p> <p><i>A Trustee raised a concern that this school's website was still not showing their curriculum intent and noted they could easily add content regardless of the website procurement they were undergoing.</i></p> <p>The CEO agreed the lack of published information underplayed how much work they had achieved on the curriculum but confirmed the Trust wide information had been updated. He agreed to reiterate to the school the importance this information was added as soon as possible and to ask if they needed support to achieve this.</p> <p><i>A Trustee also noted the website was a key tool to entice parents to send their child to the school, so it was imperative it was updated.</i></p> <p>It was noted one of the schools inspection dashboard reports contained some incorrect people listed and the CEO was tasked with asking the school to update this.</p> <p>Two schools were noted as being strong, with one aiming for an outstanding Ofsted inspection. It was recognised they had a strong curriculum model.</p> <p>It was confirmed the Headteacher recruitment at one school had been completed with the offer to be issued the next day. There was an issue with governance at the school and one governor had recently been moved to be a Trustee. The link Trustee confirmed they had offered support to the Chair for the next term and planned to attend the next LGB.</p> <p>Trustees discussed how governors could be recruited to local governing boards and suggested approaching some retired Headteachers, the Chair of Trustees to record a governor recruitment video to place on the MAT website and contacting the local brewery.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that a buddying system could be used to support newer governors and the CEO was asked to investigate this.</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>CEO</p>

	<p>The link Trustee for one of the schools was also tasked with understanding the skills gaps in the LGB with the LGB Chair for review at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was confirmed a support plan was in place at another school and the report distributed showed the initial impact in terms of strategic intention documentation being put into place with staff seeming to understand it. An interim review of the school was due the following week with the Headteacher appraisal due once they returned from sick leave. The school was noted as moving towards red in terms of the progress of the support plan because concerns had been highlighted on the impact of the plan and safeguarding. Trustees discussed next steps.</p> <p>Trustees agreed having a formal support plan in place for another school based on CPD, the curriculum and the wider curriculum model was reassuring but it was acknowledged there were staffing risks.</p> <p>7.2 Church Schools risk reports One school's report was noted to follow, but on the whole the reports presented a positive picture. One amber was noted as not being a concern given the circumstances of the new staffing. Trustees agreed it was good to have external scrutiny from the diocese advisor.</p> <p>7.3 Update on support plans It was noted the support plans had already been discussed in this item.</p> <p>7.4 School Improvement Consultant (SIC) reports and deployment The CEO described the process of visits and reports and how he checked the progress of actions. Again it was noted the reports were very positive with plans being able to be enacted again following Covid.</p> <p><i>A trustee noted one of the schools was expecting a SIAMs inspection imminently and asked how the next steps noted from the critical friend visit had been followed up.</i> The link trustee confirmed some of the items noted related to the vision and how well it was understood. The CEO was asked to review progress of the actions from the critical friend visit. It was also confirmed the Trust was using the SIC as a recently accredited Ofsted inspector to help roll out a peer review programme and the training of reviewers which would also feed more quality assurance information to the Trust.</p>	<p>A Smith</p> <p>CEO</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Impact of use of Premiums</u> – previously distributed</p> <p>Pupil Premium The CEO confirmed that all of the schools had highly bespoke plans and school based tutoring in place. Schools had been expected to account for how they had used research to inform what they put into place and to articulate how the data could be used to monitor the impacts of the interventions. Governors were also expected to monitor the effectiveness of the plans throughout the year. All statements of intent in regards to this were available on the school websites.</p> <p><i>A Trustee queried whether link governors were in place to carry out this ongoing scrutiny and tracking.</i> It was clarified there was no defined link governor for this, as it was the responsibility of all governors. The Trustees requested that the CEO provided clarity to governors on their roles in relation to Pupil Premium monitoring, regardless of whether they were a Pupil Premium link governor or not.</p>	<p>CEO</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Impact on provision from Strategic Initiatives (e.g. technology, school improvement)</u> – previously distributed</p>	

	<p>Well-being</p> <p>The Trust was starting a new initiative to focus on strategies which would be used across all schools and it was hoped the student well-being strategy would be in place for the start of the autumn term, but it would require consultation before implementing.</p>	
10.	<p>Curriculum Update – previously distributed (STAR MAT Curriculum principles, reports from LGBs, update on curriculum working groups at operational level and PSQM update)</p> <p>An update had been provided on progress of individual schools against intent, implementation and impact of their curriculum models. Updates were also provided on groups and work undertaken on the curriculum in regards to pedagogy. It was noted as being very positive that three schools had received the PSQM accreditation with another three schools on the flight path to achieving this. Trustees noted curriculum concerns had already been highlighted throughout the meeting.</p> <p><i>A Trustee asked whether there was going to be a curriculum strategy group set up.</i></p> <p>The CEO stated curriculum leaders were due to meet after half term to review what had already been implemented and whether the Trust’s curriculum principles were still correct. Schools would also share their best practice with those schools who had not made the same progress. They also wanted to agree where commonalities could be found across subjects such as how curriculum was presented on the school website or how a subject lead collated information. Curriculum networks were also being set up.</p> <p><i>A Trustee noted their concern that some websites did not include the schools’ curriculum offer and Trustees agreed this needed to be a priority.</i></p>	
11.	<p>Safeguarding update – previously distributed</p> <p>The CEO confirmed the update on DBS modelling would be presented at the next full Board of Trustees meeting in April. On boarding was continuing for the SCR with the system easy to use. Some data integrity work was planned to ensure data ported across to the new system correctly. Safeguarding reviews had been booked and the Trust planned to involve school staff in peer reviews of safeguarding at other schools for them to learn and support each other, which the Trustees welcomed.</p> <p>Trustees discussed complaints and the CEO explained that he had reminded schools that all complaints were visible to lead inspectors even if they were not qualifying or if the school had not seen them and governors were required to know the context of complaints but not the detail.</p> <p><i>Trustees suggested the complaints process could be made easier to use, perhaps with an online form available for completion that could be anonymous. They suggested the information needed to be available at Trust level so they could identify whether there was anything systemic which needed to be addressed.</i> The CEO agreed to give this further consideration.</p>	CEO
12.	<p>School Improvement Role Scoping & Improvement Strategy – previously distributed</p> <p>The CEO stated he would prefer the role be modelled into the budget for the next year with the assumption the Trust would not grow. The COO had also modelled a substantive post from September 2023. The proposal of option 1 was recommended by the CEO with consideration given to trading an additional 30 days in the next academic year to allow more work to be done to support schools who needed it.</p> <p>Trustees confirmed they supported the rationale to address the trusts’ vulnerabilities and agreed that option 1 should be modelled into next year’s budget with a more substantive post moving forwards. They agreed initial scoping discussions could take place without a commitment on capacity.</p>	

13.	<u>Policies for review/approval/acknowledgement</u> – previously distributed <u>Policies for approval</u> None for review. <u>Policies to acknowledge receipt of</u> None for review.	
14.	Items to be escalated to the Full Board A reminder to link trustees that papers would be updated in the files for their link schools on an on-going basis for them to review.	
15.	Any Other Business The Chair noted her thanks to the CEO for providing all of the reports and papers to support the meeting.	
16.	Date and time of the next meeting: 24 th May 2022, at 5.30pm	

The meeting ended at 20.10pm

These minutes were approved at the STAR MAT Board of Trustees CAS Committee meeting on 24th May 2022.

Signed:

Date:

Alison Smith (Chair of CAS Committee)

**ACTION PLAN FROM THE STAR MAT BOARD OF TRUSTEES CAS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 8th FEBRUARY 2022**

Action		Item	Person(s) Responsible	Timescale
1.	Add a note to Decision Time for all meetings to state whether there was also a set of confidential minutes for approval	2	Clerk (SV)	By 28 th Feb
2.	Notify all Trustees when documents were updated in their link Trustee folders and to reiterate they should be reviewing these regularly.	4	CEO (IY)	By 28 th Feb
3.	Request the School Improvement Officer provided an update for Trustees on getting phonics right and the commonalities across schools of phonics programmes.	6	CEO (IY)	By the next meeting
4.	Reiterate to the school the importance their curriculum information was added to their website as soon as possible and to ask if they needed support to achieve this. (KP)	7	CEO (IY)	By 28 th Feb
5.	It was noted one of the schools inspection dashboard reports contained some incorrect people listed and the CEO was tasked with asking them to update this. (SHS)	7	CEO (IY)	By 28 th Feb
6.	Understand the skills gaps in the LGB for their link school and bring back for consideration at this forum.	7	A Smith	By the next meeting
7.	Review progress of the actions from the critical friend visit for the school with a SIAMs inspection due.	7	CEO (IY)	Through continuing conversations end March

8.	Provide clarity to governors on their roles in relation to Pupil Premium, regardless of whether they were a Pupil Premium link governor	8	CEO (IY)	CofG forum 7 th March
9.	Consider whether the complaints process needed to be changed to make it easier to use and to allow systemic issues to be identified across the Trust	11	CEO (IY)	By the next meeting

Items for the next meeting:

- Provide an update for Trustees on getting phonics right and the commonalities across schools (School Improvement Officer).

Approved