

The Heath Family (NW) Multi Academy Trust
PART I - Minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on
Thursday, 14th March 2019 at 9.00 am

Present: Helen Stevenson (Chair), Jeremy Barnes, Edward Vitalis, Morag Davies, Alison Duckworth, Karl Smith, Laura Williams, David Donnelly, Jane Ainsworth		Apologies: None		Non attenders:	
				Clerk: Trish Roberts	
Items	Discussion	Action	Who	When	Notes
1. Welcome, introductions & apologies	Ms Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were given. There were no apologies to be noted.				
2. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests	A copy of the printed register was circulated and there were no changes to Trustee details to be recorded. Mr Donnelly informed Trustees that DD Education is no longer in operation and therefore his Business Interests needed to be updated accordingly. Mr Donnelly also informed Trustees that Rev Canon Felix has resigned from the Governing Body at Daresbury Primary School, and as such CoG Forum members will need to agree a new Primary Representative to attend future MAT Board meetings.	Register of Interests (Staff) to be updated in light of the notified changes. CoG Forum Primary Rep to be appointed.	P Roberts CoGs	ASAP ASAP	
3. To receive/ ratify minutes from THF Board meeting held on 20.09.18	Trustees received electronic copies of the PART I minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on 08.11.18. There were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified. RESOLVE: That the PART I minutes of the MAT Board meeting held on 08.11.18 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.				
4. To review matters arising not included on the Agenda (to include Action Tracker)	Matters Arising from Minutes of 08.11.18 Page 2 – Agenda Item 4 – Matters Arising (Clerking Services) – Mrs Roberts advised that CoGs have been asked to complete a questionnaire regarding Clerking Services at their schools. All responses have not yet been received. Page 2 – Agenda Item 4 – Matters Arising (Visioning Session) – All Trustees attended the Visioning Session on 16.01.19.				

	<p>Page 3 – Agenda Item 5 – CEO Report (MAT Governors Conference) – Mrs Ainsworth advised that due to low attendance at the last CoG Forum meeting this item had to be deferred. With this in mind, Mr Donnelly is due to meet with Mrs Ainsworth and Mrs Roberts to discuss CoG Forum going forwards. Mrs Ainsworth also explained that Governors have expressed an interest in attending twilight training sessions rather than a full day conference.</p> <p>Page 3 – Agenda Item 5 – CEO Report (MAT Board Link to CoG Forum) – Mr Donnelly explained that once CoG Forum has stabilised, he will look to invite Trustees to attend.</p> <p>Page 4 – Agenda Item 5 – CEO Report (Summary Principals Report) – Mr Donnelly explained that this will be a two tier process, ie Mr Donnelly is currently working on producing a Principal’s Report template (LGB level). Once this template is in use across the MAT, data being reported will be in a standard form and therefore a Summary Principal’s report for Trustees can then be easily produced.</p> <p>Page 5 – Agenda Item 6 – Governance Documentation – Mr Donnelly advised that the Terms of Reference have now been updated.</p> <p>Page 6 – Agenda Item 7 – Governor Induction Pack – Mrs Ainsworth and Mrs Roberts advised that a draft induction pack has been produced, but due to the resignation of the Rev Canon Felix it had not been discussed further. Mrs Ainsworth also advised that THS have produced a pack using the Trust’s draft template; further school specific items were also added to it. The clerk recently attended a governance event and shared the pack details with the organisers, who seemed very impressed with the contents.</p> <p>Linked with this item, Ms Stevenson requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Rev Canon Felix on behalf of the Trust. Mr Donnelly will ensure this happens.</p> <p>Page 7 – Agenda Item 8 – AoB – Trustees confirmed that they had received a copy of the updated meeting schedule.</p> <p>Action Tracker Mr Donnelly advised that the Action Tracker had been slightly amended so that the green items included were actions that had not been to MAT Board previously; the reason for the change is so that the report only reflects current items and does not become too unwieldy.</p>	<p>Letter of thanks to be sent to Rev Canon Felix (CoG - DPS).</p>	<p>DD/PAR</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	
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	<p>CEO Performance Targets – Mr Donnelly provided an update with regards to his appraisal/ performance management review. Ms Stevenson met with the external reviewer last week and targets will be shared with Trustees as soon as they are available.</p> <p>Every – Following the decision not to roll out Every to Trustees, it was agreed that any action mentioning Every should now be removed from the Action Tracker.</p> <p>Trustee Links to CoG Forum – It was agreed that once CoG Forum has stabilised, Trustee links with be established.</p>				
5. Chair’s Action	<p>Trustees received a report entitled ‘Governor Update – March 2019’ which provided details of the Trust Appointed Governor and Chair of Governor appointments that have been approved via Chair’s Action since the previous MAT Board Meeting (08.11.19). The document also provided details of current Governor vacancies at each school; including details of where the recruitment process was up to.</p> <p>Ms Stevenson explained how the approval process works; and then invited Mrs Roberts to provide a brief report in relation to current recruitment.</p> <p>Following discussion Trustees offered to advertise governor vacancies at their place of work, and asked Mrs Roberts to provide them with details of the vacancies and a brief summary of the role so that they can circulate it.</p> <p>Q: What is the difference between Trust Appointed and Parent Governors? A: Trust Appointed are governors who have been through a recruitment process with the Trust and on appointment represent the Trust at LGB level. Parent governors go through a nomination process and are elected by parents at the school, and are there to represent parents as a body, rather than their own individual needs.</p> <p>Following further discussion Trustees commented that it was good to see TPS with a Local Governing Body greatly strengthened and at full capacity.</p>	Brief summary of gov. vacancies/ short advert to be sent to Trustees	PAR	ASAP	
6. CEO Report dated 14.03.19	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the CEO Report (dated 14.03.19) prior to the meeting. Mr Donnelly reported:</p> <p>Governance – Trustees were advised that the Governance grading had been changed to Green. Mr Donnelly explained that this decision had been taken as both the Board and LGB’s have been greatly strengthened and are now ensuring an appropriate level of challenge/scrutiny is taking place.</p>	CEO Report to be amended to reflect change.	DD	ASAP	

	<p>Q: How are we evaluating Governance as green; especially when you take into account the Trust's current position with regards to key risks, ie finance and school improvement? A: We have looked at the structure around Governance and therefore with the improvements that have been made in terms of strengthening both the Board and LGB's. On reflection, in terms of impact of Governance, this area should be graded Amber.</p> <p>School Improvement – Trustees noted that SEND and Pupil Premium provision across the Trust is an increasing concern. Mr Donnelly provided a brief summary in relation to the issues schools are experiencing, including issues with regards to SENCO provision across the Trust. Discussion followed regarding possible interventions/strategies that could be put in place. SWS - Mr Donnelly informed Trustees that SWS have received additional funding from the DfE to support retention and recruitment, and work has also commenced following receipt of additional DfE school improvement funding (provided through the Chimney House Group). TPS – Mr Donnelly informed Trustees that TPS have submitted two ESIF bids to the RSC to support developments in English, Mathematics & Science and in Attendance. The bids total approx. £100K. Trustees will be kept updated in relation to the progress of the bids. Curriculum Reviews – Mr Donnelly reported that curriculum reviews have now taken place at all secondary schools and they have evidenced that good progress is being made towards the new Ofsted Framework. Mr Donnelly explained that there is some promising work going on with regards to curriculum design, and that he had found it a very interesting exercise. Attendance/SEND Reviews – Mr Donnelly reported that Attendance/SEND Reviews have taken place and guidance has been provided to schools.</p> <p>Q: Would the SENCO at THS have the capacity to provide support across the Trust? A: Capacity is an issue as there are a number of Statemented children at THS. The SENCO does has some time, but not enough to provide the amount of support that is required.</p> <p>Q: With the strengths you have described, would it be worth having THS' SENCO on the interview panels when recruiting new SENCOs? A: Absolutely, that is unless they want to go for the role themselves.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding cross-Trust support and how it could be improved. The Board also discussed their concerns regarding how long it takes for a child to go through assessment processes in order to get a care plan, noting that in some cases it can take up to 7 years, and therefore the child goes throughout their school life without any support being provided. It was also noted that it is not that schools are not following processes, the issue is in relation to ensuring the needs of those children are being met. Out of</p>	Trustees to be kept updated on progress of ESIF Bids at TPS	DD/JMc	As info becomes available	
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	<p>School Places – Mr Donnelly explained that there is a Resource Base at Palace Fields Primary, although they are not in a position to provide support. Discussion followed regarding the quality of provision at the Resource Base and its future strategy.</p> <p>Attendance – Mr Donnelly explained that good progress has been made but there is still a need to ensure consistency across the schools. Reports from attendance reviews were shared with E&S at their last meeting; Mr Hurren reported that attendance was still a problem at 3 of the secondary schools and PA remained high. Trustees noted that as a result of the attendance issues, safeguarding may also be impacted. Following further discussion it was agreed that a summary attendance report (dashboard review) will be produced for the next MAT Board meeting (18.07.19).</p> <p>Exclusions – Mr Donnelly explained that the level of exclusions at SWS has settled. There have been no further significant changes.</p> <p>Q: How often do Principals meet as a collective and how often within separate phases? A: They meet half termly; the first part of the meeting as a collective and then they split into phases. Primary Principals have also recently attended a Primary Developmental Day; with the agenda being set by the Principals themselves. They found the meeting beneficial and have therefore decided to hold developmental meetings on a termly basis. The secondary phase is not at this point yet; they are however looking to work collaboratively on target reporting.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding collaboration within the secondary phase; and the sharing of information across the Trust.</p> <p>Ofsted – It was noted that it is likely that inspections will take place at TPS and PFPS during this academic year. Both schools are making progress and are receiving additional support.</p> <p>Q: Are all schools in a position to produce curriculum narratives by Summer? A: There are no deadlines at the moment; Curriculum Reviews were only finished last week. A report will be produced.</p> <p>Trustees stated that they are happy to see the progress that is being made and that schools are working towards the framework.</p>	Summary Attendance report to be produced and brought to MAT Board	DD/ER	July 19 onwards	
7. Reports from Trust Sub-Committees	<p>Business & Finance</p> <p>Mr Vitalis provided a brief summary on the key matters that had been discussed at the last B&F meeting (07.03.19), which included:</p>				

	<p>Financial performance up until end of Jan 2019 – including the Trust’s operating/forecast position; the key concern is with regards to how the Trust moves out of the financial difficulties it currently faces.</p> <p>Recovery Plan – including concerns regarding high staffing ratios at some of the schools, cashflow, supply agency expenditure (expenditure needs to be brought under control; this is being closely monitored). Opportunistic savings were also discussed; B&F have asked to see details of these.</p> <p>Q: In terms of staffing costs, is there a benchmark with all schools and across the Trust? A: We would want to see all schools hit the 75% staffing mark. JMc has pulled together some benchmarking information; when compared to the norm, currently we are still over and above other schools.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly also stated that the methods of benchmarking that had been discussed are not always the best way to ascertain the schools’ actual benchmark position; and that there are other ways which provide a more accurate picture. Discussion then moved onto staffing costs; Mr Donnelly provided a brief summary on what had happened so far, ie financial model has been imposed, and budget rounds for this year have been started. He then went on to talk about the introduction of an additional metric; ie 0.79 contact ratio with pupils and 27 pupils per class; stating that if the Trust/schools were to deliver on both of these, they would come in line with other schools. Mr Donnelly confirmed that these metrics will be used to drive budgets for 2019/20; Mr Donnelly also confirmed that he was not looking at restructure/redundancy processes this year. Mr Vitalis stated that he knew someone who may be able to support the Trust with this piece of work.</p> <p>Q: Are schools completing staffing reviews this year? A: The Trust/schools are defining the staffing structures that are in place, ie there will be no redundancies, but in some cases there will be non-replacement of staff.</p> <p>Q: Will the savings be used to offset the deficit or to support schools? A: We will have to double-check guidance. Mr Donnelly will look into this.</p> <p>Capital funding – the deadline for spending 2017/18 capital funding is 31.03.19, it was noted that monies needed to have cleared the bank by this date.</p> <p>Mitchell Charlesworth Review of Financial Governance – B&F received assurances that the recommendations highlighted in the report have been implemented.</p>	Investigate how savings will be used (ie offset deficit or support schools)	DD	For next MAT Board meeting (16.07.19)	
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	<p>Centralisation Plan – B&F have asked to see a copy of the draft centralisation plan with details of when the Executive Team would want to implement it.</p> <p>Risk Register – B&F discussed the need to introduce a formalised register. A model register has been shared with Mr Donnelly.</p> <p>Education and Standards Ms Stevenson provided a brief summary on the key matters that had been discussed at the last E&S meeting (27.02.19), which included:</p> <p>Principal’s Presentation Ms Taylor provided a presentation which highlighted the challenges that she has inherited since taking on the role; and it also enabled the Trustees to clearly see the shortcomings of the Trust when the school initially converted. The committee stated that they had found the presentation very useful; agreeing that there was a need for standardised and consistent approaches (systematic framework of approach).</p> <p>The Primary and Secondary SAILs also reported on the current position of each school; drawing Trustees attention to key risks/red flags.</p>				
<p>8. For Approval: High Level Division of Responsibilities Document</p>	<p>Mr Donnelly explained that following the responses from Trustees and CoGs a number of changes had been made to the High Level Division of Responsibilities document. He then went on to provide a brief summary of what the changes were; stating that the majority of changes were minor.</p> <p>Trustees suggested that in future any documents that have had significant changes, minor or major, should be sent out with track changes so that the amendments are clearly seen. Mr Donnelly agreed that this will happen in future.</p> <p>Following further discussion Trustees confirmed that they were happy to approve the document.</p>				
<p>9. AoB</p>	<p>Visioning Session Update Trustees agreed to pick this item up during their Trustee Only meeting which follows this MAT Board meeting.</p>				

10. Date/s for Autumn Term Board Meetings	<p>The next MAT Board meeting was set to take place on 18.07.19; Ms Stevenson informed Trustees that unfortunately she was unable to attend and therefore there was a need to move the date. Amended meeting details are as follows:</p> <p>Date: Tuesday 16th July 2019 Time: 9.15 am Venue: Trust Head Offices (c/o Palace Fields Primary School)</p> <p>During discussions it was also agreed that the KS2 update will be included at this meeting.</p>				
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Meeting closed at 10.00 am

These minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting

Signed:

[Helen Stevenson]

Date: 16th July 2019