

The Heath Family (NW) Multi Academy Trust
PART I - Minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on
Thursday, 9th January 2020 at 1.00 pm

<u>Present:</u> Helen Stevenson (Chair), Edward Vitalis, Morag Davies, Karl Smith, Dave Lancaster, David Donnelly		<u>Apologies:</u> Anantha Subramanayam, Alison Duckworth, Kate Whittlesey, Jane Ainsworth		Non attenders:	
				Clerk: Trish Roberts	
Items	Discussion	Action	Who	When	Notes
1. Welcome, introductions & apologies	Ms Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Mr Anantha Subramanayam, Mrs Alison Duckworth, Mrs Kate Whittlesey and Mrs Jane Ainsworth				
2. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests	Ms Davies confirmed that there has been a change in terms of her employment details and therefore she would be completing a new declaration of interests form. There being no other changes Trustees confirmed the following declared interests: Helen Stevenson – Partner/Sole Proprietor of Satis Education, Contract with another Trust in the area (Frank Field Education Trust) Edward Vitalis – Chief Operating Officer at Bright Futures Educational Trust, & Trustee at NHS Salford Clinical Commissioning Group Morag Davies – Director of M & P Business Solutions Ltd Karl Smith – Vice Principal of Carmel College Dave Lancaster – Headteacher of All Saints Multi Academy Trust				
3. To receive/ ratify minutes from THF Board meeting held on 07.11.19	Trustees received electronic copies of PART I minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on 07.11.19. There were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified. RESOLVE: That PART I minutes of the MAT Board meeting held on 07.11.19 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	Chair of the Board to sign agreed MAT Board Minutes from 07.11.19	H Stevenson	Following this meeting 09.01.20	

<p>4. To review matters arising not included on the Agenda (to include Action Tracker)</p>	<p>Matters Arising from Minutes of 07.11.19</p> <p>Page 1 – Letter of thanks (J Barnes – Trustee): Mrs Roberts advised that this action was still outstanding. Trustees agreed that a letter should still be sent.</p> <p>Page 1 – Committee Terms of Reference: Ms Stevenson confirmed that the agreed committee Terms of Reference were signed on 07.11.19</p> <p>Page 2 – Letter of thanks (CoG – HPS): Ms Stevenson confirmed that the letter of thanks was signed and sent on 07.11.19</p> <p>Page 4 – Link Trustee: Ms Davies asked about what the next steps were in terms of the Link Trustees going out to schools. Mrs Roberts reported that she had produced some draft documentation in relation to the Link Trustee role and that she would email copies to Trustees for comment/approval.</p> <p>Page 6 – Letter to Police: Mr Donnelly apologised for the delay in producing the letter and advised that he would action it as soon as possible. Mr Donnelly also advised that he would gain a view from legal prior to it going out.</p> <p>Page 10 – Risk Register: Mr Donnelly confirmed that the Risk Register had been updated to reflect the agreed change.</p> <p>Page 11 – Communication with RSC: Mr Donnelly reported that an email had been received from the RSC regarding the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation. The email had listed a number of changes that needed to be made. Mr Donnelly advised that once the changes have been made a track- changed copy will be circulated to Trustees.</p> <p>Trustees received electronic copies of the MAT Board Action Log (20.12.19) - Mr Donnelly advised that the actions that had been scored out required approval from Trustees for them to be removed permanently from the Action Log. Trustees agreed to this suggestion and then went on to review the document in full.</p> <p>Principal’s Report: Mr Donnelly advised that Trustees have had sight of the summary report that schools would receive.</p>	<p>Letter of Thanks to be drafted and emailed to Chair of the Board</p> <p>Link Trustee draft documents to be sent to Trustees for comment/ approval</p> <p>Letter to be produced and sent to police ref Safeguarding concerns</p> <p>Updated Scheme of Delegation to be sent to Trustees for approval</p> <p>Action Log to be updated to reflect the agreed changes</p>	<p>P Roberts</p> <p>P Roberts</p> <p>D Donnelly</p> <p>D Donnelly/ P Roberts</p> <p>P Roberts</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>	
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Q: Could Trustees be provided with a copy of the reporting schedule so that we know when schools are receiving their reports?

A: Yes

Mr Donnelly went on to explain that the student report will be taken to the next E&S meeting.

Q: Did anything significant come out of the attendance reviews?

A: The reviews were carried out by myself (Mr Donnelly - CEO) and Ms Black (Director of T&L) just before Christmas. It is clear that procedures are in place at each of the schools, we just need to look at how they are delivered. A main area of focus is in relation to staff perception and how they perceive attendance procedures are delivered by SLT. Student perception is also an issue, some students spoke about how they feel that they are questioned all the time about attendance, and on some occasions in front of their peers. Another issue is in relation to the growing number of students who are taken out of school to go on family holidays during term time. In high areas of deprivation families are pushed into this course of action as this is the only way they can afford to take their children away on holiday (ie the amount issued in a fine is much smaller than the 100s of £s extra they would have to fund to go on holiday in peak season). Although we understand the reasons for the decision, we, as an educational establishment have to look at ways of discouraging the practice. We are therefore continuing to work with families to improve their understanding of the impact this may have on their child's educational outcomes. We are also looking to introduce 'Magpie' sessions for staff so that they can see how other schools across the Trust work, thereby improving links and sharing good practice. We also take note that attendance is also closely linked to teaching and learning; ie if we are not delivering what the children want, attendance will be impacted.

Q: What is your expectation in terms of when these improvements will take place?

A: The profile is improving in all schools (data will be brought to E&S). There is a world of difference, particularly within the secondary schools. We will always look to improve, ie once everyone reaches Good, the next level is then "What does Outstanding look like". Systemisation of teaching does not always lead to good Teaching & Learning. We are looking to reach a plateau whereby teaching across all schools is Good; and it is our view that once we get between Good and Outstanding, lessons should be engaging for all children. It should however be noted that it takes at least 2-3 years to reach this level.

	<p>Mr Donnelly also explained that attendance was discussed at the RSC meeting; and that both Mr Donnelly and Ms Stevenson had asked the RSC if they had examples of best practice, and if so, could she put them in touch with THF.</p> <p>Q: Are our 4 secondary schools taking on any Mindset culture? Is there a thought to look at a GCSE Mindset model? A: I'm not aware of it, but would be happy to find out more.</p> <p>Following further discussion Mr Smith agreed to share information regarding the Mindset model with Mr Donnelly.</p> <p>Q: In relation to Attendance processes, are there senior staff in place at each school accountable for this area? A: Yes, there is a SLT member in place at each school.</p> <p>Visioning Session and Safeguarding Report: Trustees noted that a visioning session is planned following this meeting and that they had received a copy of the Safeguarding Report, and therefore agreed that these actions could now be closed down.</p> <p>Faithful & Gould Survey: Mr Donnelly advised Trustees that the Faithful & Gould Survey would be taken to the next B&F meeting (05.03.20).</p>	Information ref the Mindset Model to be shared with D Donnelly	K Smith	ASAP	
5. Chair's Action	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the Chair's Action and Governance Update (dated 18.12.19) prior to the meeting. The paper outlined any Chair's Actions that have taken place since the previous MAT Board meeting (07.11.19) and an update on Governor appointments, resignations and recruitment processes currently taking place to address the vacancies.</p> <p>Trust Appointed Governor Appointments: Mr Daniel Williams (Litherland Moss Primary School)</p> <p>Governance Update Since the last MAT Board meeting the Trust received confirmation that Ms Maddie Quinn's (Staff governor - The Prescott School) term of office had come to an end. An election has since taken place and Miss Karen Bates has been elected.</p>				

	<p>Governance Vacancies: Trust: 2 x Members, 1 x Trustees LGB's: 5 Trust-Appointed Governors, 1 x Parent, 1 x Staff</p> <p>Trustees thanked Mrs Roberts for the excellent job she has done with regards governor recruitment.</p>				
<p>6. CEO Report - Nov 2019</p>	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the CEO Report (dated January 2020) prior to the meeting. Mr Donnelly reported:</p> <p>Overall – There is no change to the Trust’s overall grading, although it was noted that the Trust continues to meet its milestones and the recovery plan remains on track. Mr Donnelly also reported that discussions are now complete with the ESFA regarding restructuring of the repayment schedule.</p> <p>Governance – Mr Donnelly reported that as Trustee vacancies have been filled he would now like to regrade Governance as Green. Discussion followed regarding the rationale behind this proposal. During the discussion Ms Stevenson suggested that it would be good practice for Trustees to carry out a self-assessment of governance, with a view to arranging an external assessment of governance next year. All Trustees agreed with this suggestion. Ms Stevenson then went on to say that she was willing to agree with Mr Donnelly’s grading of Governance and then asked Trustees for their opinion. All Trustees in attendance agreed with the grading.</p> <p>School Improvement – see PART II minutes</p> <p>Ofsted – Mr Donnelly advised that the Ofsted grading had been moved back to Red; the rationale behind this decision was that DPS are now eligible for inspection. LHS is also potentially due a monitoring visit towards the end of the summer term. TPS are also due a Section 8 visit. Discussion followed regarding where the Trust currently grades each school and the work that has taken place in preparing them to be Ofsted ready.</p> <p>Q: Does DPS have an Ofsted Plan in place? A: Yes.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding the difficulties that schools such as DPS have faced under the new Ofsted Framework, ie schools that have been previously graded Outstanding (and therefore exempt from inspection) have not done as well. Discussion followed</p>	<p>CEO Report to be amended to reflect the agreed changes</p>	<p>D Donnelly</p>	<p>This point forward</p>	

	<p>regarding the importance of supporting the leadership at DPS and providing opportunity for the Principal to speak to Trustees in person. With this in mind it was agreed that the Principal will be invited to attend/present to the Board at the next Education & Standards meeting (26.02.20).</p> <p>Exclusions – Mr Donnelly advised that Exclusion rates have continued to fall across the Trust although they still remain high. Mr Donnelly advised that further investigation of policy and practice will be taking place at one of the schools.</p> <p>Trustees thanked Mr Donnelly for his report.</p>	Principal from DPS to be invited to next Education & Standards meeting (26.02.20)	D Donnelly / P Roberts	ASAP	
<p>7. Reports from Trust Sub-Committees</p>	<p>Business & Finance Mr Vitalis provided a brief summary on the key matters that had been discussed at the last B&F meeting (19.12.19), details of which included:</p> <p>Statutory Report and Accounts – the accounts for Y/E 31.08.19 were presented by representatives of Mitchell Charlesworth (Auditors), and following full discussion were approved by all Trustees in attendance. Mr Vitalis reported that Trustees were really happy with the Y/E position, stating that there had been significant improvement in terms of the Trust’s deficit (£78K), this is of particular significance when comparing it to the figures estimated during the course of the year. Mr Vitalis went on to say that the Trust is in a better position than what had been predicted and that this was testament to the work undertaken by the Trust finance team and the auditors; Trustees agreed and also gave their thanks.</p> <p>Management Letter – the management letter reported on some areas for improvement and at the B&F meeting it was noted that some progress has already been made. Mr Vitalis stated that B&F colleagues agreed that the Trust is continuing to move in the right direction, but that they can’t take the foot off the pedal, in terms of progressing/moving forwards.</p> <p>Internal Audit Services – the tender proposal will be in respect of a more holistic view, ie not just financial scrutiny, but also around seeking assurances in relation to other areas such as Governance, and possibly School Improvement. Trustees will also be fully involved in the tendering process, including taking part in interviewing candidates.</p>				

	<p>Mr Smith thanked Mr Vitalis and B&F colleagues for their efforts in supporting the Trust to get to this position. Mr Vitalis stated that the credit needs to go to the Trust's finance team. Trustees added their thanks to all involved.</p> <p>Education & Standards</p> <p>Ms Stevenson reported that following the appointment of Ms Whittlesey and Mr Lancaster she was now in a position to invite both of them to join the E&S committee, thereby enabling it to become quorate once more. Mr Lancaster confirmed that he was more than happy to serve on this committee. Mrs Roberts will contact Ms Whittlesey to this effect.</p> <p>Discussion then followed regarding timings and venues for meetings. Following discussion it was agreed that timings for all MAT Board and Committee meetings would move to 8 - 10 am, and venues for committee meetings will be as follows:</p> <p>E&S – The Prescott School B&F – Trust Head Offices, c/o Palace Fields Primary School</p>	<p>Ms Whittlesey to be invited to join the Education & Standards Committee</p> <p>Updated MAT Board meeting schedule to be circulated to Trustees</p>	<p>H Stevenson/ P Roberts</p> <p>P Roberts</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>	
<p>8. Risk Register</p>	<p>Trustees received a copy of the current Risk Register</p> <p>Trustees agreed that no changes were required. Trustees then went on to discuss the register in further detail.</p> <p>Item 10 – Staff Retention and Recruitment Strategy <i>Q When will the Staff Retention and Recruitment Strategy be completed; is there an agreed timeframe?</i> <i>A: There is a series of tasks that need to be done in relation to this. Most areas are covered in the Trust Strategy document; we just need to agree the summative actions of when tasks are completed.</i></p> <p>Following further discussion it was agreed that a timetable would be produced and brought to the next Board meeting. Trustees also suggested that once the timetable is agreed the mitigation grading could possibly be moved to Amber.</p> <p>Trustees also spoke about the crossover of responsibilities between the central team and academy leaders; however it was noted that the Trust's High Level Division of Responsibility document outlined these parameters. Following further debate it was agreed that Trustees would find it beneficial to revisit this document as well as having a</p>	<p>Risk Register to be amended to reflect the agreed change</p>	<p>D Donnelly</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	

	<p>session on HR responsibilities, thereby receiving assurances around policy provision and enabling discussions around what the future central team will look like.</p> <p>Q: In relation to CPD/Wellbeing, is there coherence across the primary and secondary sectors?</p> <p>A: It's not there yet, but in future it will be in place as it is a large part of Director of Teaching & Learning's role. A lot of the visioning session also includes this.</p> <p>Q: Do we have a staff climate survey/wellbeing proforma, and do wellbeing interviews take place?</p> <p>A: Similar to the last response, this is something we will be looking to bring in; the Trust's HR Manager will be asked to pick this up.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding the recent MAT review; Mr Donnelly spoke about how school based staff are beginning to understand that the term "we are the MAT" means both the central team and the school communities as a whole; which is a really positive notable change in climate.</p> <p>Q: Is it worth organising a Strategy away day for Trustees & Principals to focus on the Trust's vision etc?</p> <p>A: Yes, this would be really useful especially in terms of building relationships between the Trust Board and their schools; as there can sometimes be a perceived disconnect between the two.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding other items that could be included in the away day; Mr Smith suggested that a good area to look at would be around the approach to disadvantaged learners.</p> <p>Q: The overall status of Item 10 is Red, what are our expectations of when it will move to Amber?</p> <p>A: This is linked to the Vision; for example what does an Amber school look like, and what needs to happen to move it to Green, ie does Amber mean meeting national levels, and all schools achieve an Ofsted grading of Good. It would be really good to debate this further. All agreed</p>				
9. AoB	There were no AoB to be discussed.				

10. Meeting Dates & Venues for 2019-20 Schedule	See Agenda item 7 for discussion around timings and venues for meetings. Dates of next meetings: E&S: Thursday 26 th February 2020 B&F: Thursday 5 th March 2020 MAT Board: Thursday 19 th March 2020				
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Meeting closed at 3.00 pm

These minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting

Signed:

[Helen Stevenson]

Date: 19th March 2020