

**The Heath Family (NW) Multi Academy Trust**  
**PART I - Minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on**  
**Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 8.00 am**

**\*\*\* This meeting was held remotely using Microsoft Teams \*\*\***

<u>Present:</u> Helen Stevenson (Elected Chair), Edward Vitalis, Karl Smith, Morag Davies, David Donnelly, Sharon Black, Craig Parkinson, Judith McConville		<u>Apologies:</u> Alison Duckworth, Kate Whittlesey Non attenders:			
		Clerk: Trish Roberts			
Items	Discussion	Action	Who	When	Notes
<b>1. Election of Chair &amp; Vice Chair of the Board</b>	Mrs Roberts (TGM) confirmed that she had received written nominations for the role of Chair. Details of nominee/ proposer/ seconder are as follows: <b>Chair of the Board:      Nominee:</b> Helen Stevenson <b>Proposed by:</b> Kate Whittlesey <b>Seconded by:</b> Morag Davies  All present agreed the nomination and there being no other nominees; <b>RESOLVED: That Ms Helen Stevenson is duly elected as Chair of the Board.</b>	DfE database 'Getting Information about Schools' (GIAS) to be updated within 14 days of the appointments	P Roberts	By 24.12.20	
	Mrs Roberts (TGM) also confirmed that she had received written nominations for the role of Vice Chair. Details of nominee/ proposer/ seconder are as follows: <b>Vice Chair of the Board      Nominee:</b> Edward Vitalis <b>Proposed by:</b> Morag Davies <b>Seconded by:</b> Kate Whittlesey  All present agreed the nomination and there being no other nominees; <b>RESOLVED: That Mr Edward Vitalis is duly elected as Vice Chair of the Board.</b>	Newly elected Chair to apply for DBS certification countersigned by the Secretary of State for Education (within 14 days of updating GIAS)	H Stevenson	By 07.01.21	
<b>2. Welcome, introductions &amp; apologies</b>	Ms Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Ms A Duckworth and Ms K Whittlesey.  Ms Stevenson reported that she had received an email communication from Mr Anantha Subramanayam notifying her of his intention to resign as a Trustee with immediate effect. In his email Mr Subramanayam explained that the reason he had reached his decision was in the main as a result of Covid-19 having such a significant impact in terms of his work commitments within the NHS; and as such he felt at this time and for the	Thank you letter to be produced and sent to AS on behalf of the Trust Board  DfE / Companies House to be notified of AS's resignation			

	<p>foreseeable future he would be unable to give the role of Trustee the time and commitment it requires. Ms Stevenson, reported that as a Chair's Action, she had responded via email to Mr Subramanayam to accept his resignation on behalf of the Trust Board and to thank him for everything he has done during his time with The Heath Family.</p> <p>Following brief discussion regarding the reasons behind the resignation, Trustees confirmed that they move to formally accept the resignation.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: that the resignation of Mr Anantha Subramanayam is formally accepted as of 10.12.20</b></p> <p>Quoracy: The executive team also explained that although the meeting was quorate at this point, due to work commitments a number of Trustees had indicated that they would need to leave the meeting early. As a result of this it would mean that the Trust Board would not be quorate from around 9.15 am onwards. As such Executive Officers and Trustees agreed to re-order the agenda as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part I Agenda items 1-4</li> <li>• Part II Agenda items 16-18</li> <li>• Part I Agenda items 9 and 11</li> <li>• Part 1 Agenda items 7 and 8</li> <li>• and then revert back to original order for the remaining agenda items 5, 6, 10, 12-15</li> </ul>				
<p><b>3. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests</b></p>	<p>Trustees confirmed that there were no interests to be declared in relation to this meeting:</p> <p>Helen Stevenson – Partner/Sole Proprietor of Satis Education, Contract with another Trust in the area (Frank Field Education Trust), Related to a Local Governor at one of THF schools (Sister).</p> <p>Edward Vitalis - Chief Operating Officer at Bright Futures Educational Trust, &amp; Trustee at NHS Salford Clinical Commissioning Group</p> <p>Karl Smith – Vice Principal of Carmel College</p> <p>Morag Davies – Director of M &amp; P Business Solutions Ltd</p>	<p>Updated Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests to be published on the Trust's website.</p>	<p>P Roberts</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	

	Since this meeting Mr Vitalis has also notified the Trust that he is a Trustee at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust. The Register of Business interests has been updated to reflect this change.				
<b>4. To receive/ ratify PART I Minutes from THF Board meeting held on 15.10.20</b>	Trustees received an electronic copy of PART I minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on 15.10.20. There were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified.  <b>RESOLVE: That PART I minutes of the MAT Board meeting held on 15.10.20 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</b>	Chair of the Board to sign agreed MAT Board Minutes from 15.10.20	HS	ASAP	
<b>9. Pay Progression 2019-20 to 2020-21</b>	Mr Donnelly reported that, as a result of the impact that Covid had on schools in the second half of the last academic year, and in accordance with DfE guidance, all teachers eligible for pay progression for the academic year 2019-20 would progress to the relevant scale point, unless performance concerns had been raised and formal processes to deal with these concerns had already begun.  The board was advised by Mr Donnelly that he had received representations from 2 Local Governing Bodies in relation to leadership pay. These were discussed and considered by Trustees after requesting additional information from Executive Officers, at which point they voted unanimously not to support either representation.  <b>DECISION: 100% of the Trustees in attendance (4/4) voted not to support the representations made by the two Local Governing Bodies.</b>  (See PART II minutes for further detail of discussion)				
<b>11. Governance Update (incl Trustee Recruitment)</b>	Trustees received an electronic copy of the Governance Update Report Dec 2020 (and associated documents) prior to the meeting.  <b>Trustee Recruitment:</b> Mrs Roberts advised that interviews were completed as of 09.12.20, and Members were due to complete their deliberations by the end of the week. Mrs Roberts will keep Trustees updated.  <b>Link Trustees:</b> Ms Stevenson requested that Link Trustees make initial contact with their respective schools, if they have not done so already. Mr Donnelly confirmed that a number of Trustees have made initial contact and that it has been received positively by school leaders.	Link Trustees to make initial contact with their respective schools	Trustees	ASAP	

	<p><b>Governance Handbook:</b> Mrs Roberts reported that the DfE updated the Governance Handbook in October 2020, and that a copy has been uploaded into the Trustee’s document store on GovernorHub. A tracked version has also been uploaded so that changes can be reviewed easily.</p> <p><b>Governance Self-Evaluation:</b> Mr Donnelly suggested that Trustees could potentially complete the Self-Evaluation process and combine the induction of the new Trustees into one event. Mr Donnelly noted that the Board have made really good progress over the past couple of years, but that there is a potential risk of destabilisation when the new Trustees are appointed, ie the Board will nearly double if all five posts are filled.</p> <p>Following discussion Trustees agreed with the proposal for a joint Self-Evaluation/ Induction event to take place in Spring Term 2021.</p> <p>Mrs Roberts also raised the idea of a ‘Buddy’ system being implemented for the newly appointed Trustees. Trustees agreed that this would be a good support system to put in place.</p> <p><b>Trustee Reporting Mechanisms:</b> <i>Trust Board Report</i> – Trustees voiced concerns regarding the proposed circulation groups for this report, and also the volume of paperwork being introduced. It was agreed that the Trust Board report will be discussed in further detail during the Self-Evaluation/Induction event. <i>E&amp;S Report</i> – Trustees were advised that the purpose of this document is provide a formal reporting mechanism between the committee and the Board itself; and that it would also be helpful in relation to the Self Evaluation process. Trustees agreed.</p> <p><b>GovernorHub:</b> Mrs Roberts explained that it is the Executive Officers intention to move to sending Trust Board/Committee papers out solely using GovernorHub from January 2021. Up until now papers have been sent out using both email and GovernorHub so as to ensure Trustees did not experience any problems during the introduction period. Mrs Roberts asked Trustee whether they have had any problems accessing the GovernorHub system during this time and also whether they were happy with the proposal to move to only using GovernorHub.</p> <p>Trustees in attendance confirmed that they have not had any issues accessing GovernorHub, but voiced concern about whether they would still receive an email</p>	<p>Date to be arranged in Spring Term 2020 – Self-Evaluation / Induction Event</p> <p>Buddy System to be implemented in respect of newly appointed Trustees</p> <p>Trust Board Report to be discussed in further detail during Self-Evaluation / Induction Event</p> <p>TGM to be notified of any issues in relation to accessing GovernorHub</p>	<p>Trustees / Executive Officers / TGM</p> <p>Trustees / TGM</p> <p>Trustees</p> <p>Trustees / Executive Officers</p>	<p>Early Spring Term 2021</p> <p>As part of appointment process – Dec 2020</p> <p>Spring Term 2021</p> <p>ASAP</p>	
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	<p>notifying them of the publication of papers. Mrs Roberts explained that when the notification is added to GovernorHub, an email is automatically sent to all members of the Trust Board, so these notifications should continue.</p> <p><b>LGB Skills Audits:</b> Mrs Roberts advised that LGBs are currently completing their skills audit forms and once the data has been received and collated, an analysis report will be produced and circulated to the Trust Board. The skills audit results will be used to analyse skills/experiences of Governors across the Trust, identify any skills gaps, training needs/CPD etc and also in relation to looking at succession planning.</p> <p><b>CoG Catch-Up Meetings:</b> Mrs Roberts reported that she has met with all CoGs during this term to ensure they are fully updated in terms of governance documents that have been circulated to them, and also to ascertain whether there is anything the Trust can do to support them in their role. These meetings have been received positively by CoGs and will take place on a termly basis (as a minimum) going forwards.</p>				
<p><b>7. Coronavirus Update</b></p>	<p>Mr Donnelly provided an update to Trustees in respect of the Government’s announcement that schools may close a day earlier for Christmas; by scheduling an INSET day on the 18.12.20, the government have said that it will allow "six clear days" before Christmas Eve, thereby ensuring teachers and heads do not have to engage with "track and trace issues" throughout the break. Unions have also raised concerns regarding teachers not being able to have a break and are therefore calling for flexibility with regards school term dates.</p> <p>Executive Officers and Schools Leaders have met to discuss this issue and all have agreed that Trust schools need to remain open. The issue of engaging with track and trace does not impact all staff; and Mr Parkinson has also set up a system whereby it can be picked up by the central team from 18.12.20 until Christmas Eve, thereby removing the impact on school level. Executive Officers and School Leaders feel that it is important that schools remain open as it is in the best interests of both pupils and parents; therefore at this point all Trust schools will remain open up to and including 18.12.20, as planned.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly then provided details regarding current outbreaks within Trust schools; stating that there have been sporadic outbreaks, but by and large it’s business as normal. A group have been sent home today in the primary phase, the first in a fortnight, before that there had only been 1 case this week and a slight uptick in</p>				

	<p>numbers last week. There has only been 1 case in our primary schools during December, and there are still a couple of schools who have had no cases at all.</p> <p><b>Q: If a parent couldn't contact school, how would they let anyone know?</b>  <b>A: During the first 6 days (19.12.20 – 24.12.20) there will be contract tracing capacity. After the 6 days, the onus is on the parent to instead liaise with NHS Test &amp; Trace.</b></p> <p>Trustees voiced concern regarding the wellbeing of central staff; working up to 5.00 pm on Christmas Eve is going above and beyond what should be expected.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly thanked Trustees for their concerns, but confirmed that Executive Officers were able and happy to take this on.</p> <p><i>* At this point Mr Smith advised that he would need to leave the meeting.</i></p> <p>Following further discussion Trustees confirmed that they were happy with the proposal for schools to remain open, but noted that if at any point Executive Officers during the period 18.12.20 to 24.12.20 begin to struggle, they need to get in touch with Trustees straightaway.</p> <p>Executive Officers thanked the Trustees for their support; and also advised that the decision to remain open was in line with the landscape of all schools within the Local Authorities we work with.</p>				
<p><b>8. CEO Report (incl. receive Executive Remuneration letter from ESFA)</b></p>	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the CEO report (dated October 2020) prior to the meeting. Mr Donnelly reported:</p> <p><b>Overall</b> – Given the Trust's financial situation and overall performance of Trust schools the status remains at red.</p> <p><b>School Improvement</b> – Attainment and Progress remain a concern across the Trust, although not as much a concern as had been predicted prior to schools reopening. Year 1 children have been significantly impacted in terms of loss of learning, ie they missed a vast majority of their reception year, which acts as an introduction to more formal learning. Catch up plans are in place for these cohorts and they are making good progress; concentrated learning is key. In KS4 – the greatest concern is in relation to the impact on exams next year; local media contacted Mr Jardine, Executive Principal (THS/TPS) to gain his view on this issue and they also interviewed students at TPS to gain</p>				

	<p>their perspective. Our students were a credit to the Trust and their school, as they were able to formulate their views on the impact Covid has had on their learning and their concerns for the future, in such a mature and succinct manner.</p> <p>Discussion followed regarding the impact Covid has had on learning across the Trust, and the possible scenarios around exams next year. Trustees asked that a more detailed presentation on this aspect is provided to the full Board at their next meeting – presentation to include impact, risks and mitigations, update on where we are up to in relation to exams/moderation etc.</p> <p><b>Ofsted</b> – Full inspections will not return until Summer term 2021; but it is expected that schools causing concern may have some form of visit during Spring Term 2021. TPS received a one day visit on 17.11.20; the visit was held remotely, and the school teams reported that it was a rigorous process in itself. The outcome letter only allows for 450 words and as such it is quite difficult to summarise such a rigorous process. The HMI who conducted the inspection was also very keen to stress that the visit was a ‘fact-finding’ mission to identify the impact Covid has had on children’s learning. Mr Donnelly then went on to explain that it is his understanding that inspectors will visit all ‘inadequate’ schools and potentially those who are RI during Spring Term 2021; this could therefore impact LHS. Mrs Black confirmed that these visits would have no overall grading, but that if Ofsted identified anything, i.e. saw some movement towards a Good grading, they could look to schedule a Section 5 visit.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b> – To date the feared increase in safeguarding issues due to lockdown have not materialised.</p> <p><b>Q: Last year, Trustees received a safeguarding assurance report, can we ask that the Trust Safeguarding Lead produces a similar report in time for the next Trust Board meeting (25.02.21).</b></p> <p><b>A: Yes, that is not a problem; we will ensure this is arranged.</b></p> <p><b>Attendance</b> – levels have fallen back in line with National trends; albeit slightly above. Mr Donnelly confirmed that attendance levels vary across the Trust, with some quite high; but no school is significantly lower than national levels.</p>	<p>School Improvement Presentation on impact of Covid to be produced and delivered to Trust Board</p> <p>Safeguarding Assurance report to be produced and brought to next Trust Board meeting.</p>	<p>Executive Officers</p> <p>Executive Officers / Safeguarding Lead</p>	<p>For Trust Board meeting 25.02.21</p> <p>For Trust Board meeting 25.02.21</p>	
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	<p>Trustees stated that it would be helpful to have headline figures in relation to Attendance and Exclusions; Mr Donnelly confirmed that he will ensure all future reports include these figures.</p> <p><b>Q: With regards attendance, in the past Trustees have received an individual report template showing school level attendance and exclusion figures; as yet this year we have not seen it, when will the next set of these reports come to Board?</b></p> <p>Executive Officers spoke about the introduction of the Power BI project, whereby a centralised dashboard will be available; and also explained the issues that had been experienced when attempting to recruit a consultant who is able to manage the system, including roll out. Halton LA are currently working on an SLA-type basis in relation to this. In the meantime, the next school data drop is due Spring Term 2020 and as such draft reports could be produced at that point. Trustees noted that these types of report will also assist Link Trustees in getting to know their schools. Mr Donnelly advised that a data report will be produced and forwarded to Trustees; adding that once Power BI is operational training will be offered so that Trustees have access to data without having to wait for reports.</p> <p><i>* At this point Ms Davies advised that she would need to leave the meeting. As a result, the Board were not quorate from this point forwards. As there were no further decision-making items to be discussed, it was deemed that the meeting could proceed.</i></p> <p><b>Communication with External Agencies</b> – the ESFA wrote to all Trusts who had 2 of more Executive Leader salaries over £100K and THF received one of these letters. In response Executive Officers wrote back to explain the rationale behind the two salaries; pointing out that they had been based on educational/financial grounding, and that both salaries had resulted in significant savings to the Trust. The letter received in the Trust papers was a copy of the ESFA’s response.</p> <p>Although Trustees were happy that the Excessive Executive Pay (EEP) criteria had been reassessed in relation to THF and the ESFA had determined that THF no longer met the criteria; they were dismayed that the response did not go further to apologise for the stress / extra work that had been caused by the initial communications.</p> <p>Following discussion Trustees agreed that the CoB could raise this issue with the RSC at their next meeting.</p>	<p>Future CEO Reports to include headline figures for attendance &amp; exclusions</p> <p>Individual report template showing school level attendance and exclusion figures to be produced and circulated to Trustees</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>Executive Officers</p>	<p>From 25.02.21 onwards</p> <p>As soon as possible following school level data drop</p>	
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	<p><b>HR</b> – Mr Donnelly reported that Mr Yates has been through a rigorous recruitment process for the substantive role of Principal at LHS. Mr Donnelly noted that Ms Stevenson was involved in the process and that the recruitment panel agreed that Mr Yates should be offered the role on a permanent basis; since then Mr Yates has accepted the post.</p>				
<p><b>5. To review Matters Arising not included on the Agenda (to include Action Tracker)</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising from Minutes of 15.10.20</b> – it was agreed that there were no matters arising to be discussed.</p> <p><b>Trustees also received an electronic copy of THF Action Log dated 10.12.20 prior to the meeting</b> - the Executive Team reported that they were on course for all of the outstanding actions. Trustees also agreed that the item regarding procedures for handling Trustee non-attendance protocol could be moved to green, as this is picked up within the Code of Conduct for Trustees.</p>				
<p><b>6. Chair’s Action Report (to receive)</b></p>	<p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Chair’s Action &amp; Governor Membership Update 10.12.20 report prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Ms Stevenson explained that the report provided information in relation to the actions she had completed on behalf of the board, since the last meeting.</p> <p>Mrs Roberts then provided an update in relation to the recruitment/election processes currently taking place at HPS, THS, PFPS, TPS</p>				
<p><b>10. Trust Committee Updates</b></p>	<p><b>Education &amp; Standards Committee Update</b> - Trustees received an electronic copy of the E&amp;S Committee board report dated 12.11.20 prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Vitalis (in the absence of the Chair of E&amp;S Committee) confirmed that the report was a true reflection of the meeting. He then offered to field any questions.</p> <p>There being no questions, Trustees thanked Mr Vitalis for stepping in.</p>				
	<p><b>Business, Finance &amp; Audit Committee Update</b> – As there has been no BF&amp;A committee meetings since the last Board meeting, a committee report was not available. The next BF&amp;A meeting is due to take place on 17.12.20.</p>				
<p><b>12. Risk Register</b></p>	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the Trust’s Risk Register prior to the meeting;</p>	<p>Risk Register to be updated to reflect the agreed change</p>	<p>Executive Officers</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	

	<p><i>Risk Item 16 – COVID 19: Mr Donnelly reported that this item had been added to the risk register since the last meeting, but that the risk rating would need to be reviewed. Following discussion Trustees agreed that as the data drop has not yet occurred it would be advisable to move the Risk rating to Red; and then once the data has been analysed the risk rating should then be reassessed.</i></p> <p>Trustees then reviewed the areas of risk assigned to the MAT Board, and there being no further changes requested the Risk Register document was approved.</p>	(Risk Item 16 – COVID 19 – Risk Rating to move to Red)			
<b>13. Policies for Approval</b>	There were no policies to be reviewed at this meeting. It was however agreed that this item should remain as a standing item for all future meetings.				
<b>14. AoB</b>	<p><b>Review Format and Content of Trust Board Papers:</b> Trustees advised that they were happy with the format/content of the Trust Board papers, but also noted that documentation is continually under review (as seen at this meeting), and as such changes will be discussed/requested as and when needed.</p> <p>Ms Stevenson concluded the meeting by thanking Executive Officers on behalf of the Trustees for everything they have done this year. Ms Stevenson then went on to wish everyone a good, restful and safe Christmas.</p>				
<b>15. Date of Next Meeting</b>	The date of the next MAT Board meeting is Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021				

Meeting closed at 9.45 am

These minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting

Signed: .....

**[Helen Stevenson]**

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021