

The Heath Family (NW) Multi Academy Trust
PART I - Minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on
Monday 6th September 2021 at 8.00 am

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

<u>Present:</u> Helen Stevenson (Chair), Edward Vitalis, Karl Smith, Tony Gundersen, Janine Inglis, Mark Stanton, Kate Whittlesey, Annette Williams, David Donnelly, Sharon Black, Craig Parkinson		<u>Apologies:</u> Christopher Davis, Alison Duckworth Non attenders: None			
		Clerk: Trish Roberts			
Items	Discussion	Action	Who	When	Notes
1. Welcome, introductions & apologies	Ms Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting. At the meeting apologies were accepted from Ms A Duckworth; and since the meeting, apologies were also received from Mr C Davis.				
2. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests	Trustees have received a copy of the Declaration of Interest Form 2021-22 for completion; once all forms have been returned a new Register of Business Interests for 2021-22 will be produced. For this meeting Trustees received a copy of the Trust's Register of Business Interests 2020-21 prior to the meeting; no further declarations were received at the meeting: Helen Stevenson – Partner/Sole Proprietor of Satis Education, Director of Optimum Education Resourcing Ltd, Contract with another Trust in the area (Frank Field Education Trust), Related to a Local Governor at one of THF schools (Sister), Chair of Governors at Carmel College. Edward Vitalis – Chief Operating Officer at Bright Futures Educational Trust, & Non-Exec Director at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust Karl Smith – Vice Principal at Carmel College Tony Gundersen – Director of TG Business Services Ltd, Governor at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School Mark Stanton – Trustee at Pestalozzi International Foundation, Sole Trader of SSE Potential, Associate Coach at New Level Results, Delivery Partner for Rising Vibe Ltd, Delivery Partner for Mightify	Register of Business Interests 2021-22 to be produced, and published on Trust website	P Roberts / C Parkinson	ASAP	

	Kate Whittlesey – Director of The Send Advisory Team Annette Williams – CEO at Weaver Trust, Governor at Pattishall CofE Primary School				
3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair	<p>Mrs Roberts advised that no written nominations for the role of Chair and Vice Chair had been received prior to the meeting. Trustees were then invited to provide nominations for the two roles:</p> <p>Details of nominee/ proposer/ seconder are as follows:</p> <p>Chair of the Board: Nominee: Helen Stevenson Proposed by: Mark Stanton Seconded by: Morag Davies</p> <p>All present agreed the nomination and there being no other nominees; RESOLVED: That Ms Helen Stevenson is duly elected as Chair of the Board.</p> <p>Vice Chair of the Board Nominee: Edward Vitalis Proposed by: Helen Stevenson Seconded by: Mark Stanton</p> <p>All present agreed the nomination and there being no other nominees; RESOLVED: That Mr Edward Vitalis is duly elected as Vice Chair of the Board.</p>	DfE database 'Getting Information about Schools' (GIAS) to be updated within 14 days of the appointments	P Roberts	By 20.09.21	
4. To receive/ ratify PART I and PART II Minutes from THF Board meeting held on 08.07.21	<p>Trustees received an electronic copy of PART I minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on 08.07.21. There were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified.</p> <p>RESOLVE: That PART I minutes of the MAT Board meeting held on 08.07.21 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	Chair of the Board to sign agreed MAT Board Minutes from 08.07.21	H Stevenson	ASAP	
5. To review Matters Arising not included on the Agenda (to include Action Tracker)	<p>Matters Arising from Minutes of 08.07.21</p> <p>Ofsted Update Session: Ms Stevenson noted that the Ofsted Update session facilitated by Eileen Mulgrew (Senior HMI) has been arranged for 07.10.21 10.30 am – 12 noon and invitations have been received by Trustees.</p>				

	<p>Trust Strategy: Mr Donnelly reported that the Trust Strategy document has been updated and he is due to discuss with Principals at their meeting on Friday. The draft will then need to be reviewed/agreed by Trustees. Discussion followed around the process for this and it was agreed that the review would happen remotely; the document will be circulated to Trustees via email and any issues/comments emailed back to Mr Donnelly.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly also advised that a wider discussion would be needed with regards the work on the new Strategic Plan for 2022 onwards, suggesting that it may be beneficial to build in annual strategic planning day into the Trust Board calendar. Discussion followed and it was agreed that this would be actioned, and that for this year's meeting it would be good to have an experienced professional from this field to facilitate the session/advise Trustees. Trustees also noted that the session would need Exec Officers present as well. Mr Donnelly and Ms Stevenson will meet to discuss how to pull this together.</p> <p>Risk Register: Mr Donnelly reported that since the Risk & Reporting Working Party meeting in June 2021, he met with Ms Inglis over the summer where they looked at aligning risk to the Trust's strategic objectives. The next step in the process is for Ms Inglis to bring the proposals back to the working party to discuss how the Trust takes this forward. Trustees agreed that a meeting will be arranged to look at this.</p> <p>Trustees also received an electronic copy of THF Action Log dated 08.07.21 prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Exclusions: Q: Where are we up to with regards the reporting template for exclusions figures? A: Power Bi has been brought in and is now up and running, albeit in skeletal form. This also links to the work on Risk and Reporting; ie discussions need to take place around what the Trust Board want to see and how much information do they need (reporting, alerting, access). This will be taken to the Risk & Reporting working party meeting.</p> <p>Safeguarding: Trustees asked about the audit of Safeguarding training, and Mr Donnelly advised that a Safeguarding update report will be brought to the next Trust Board meeting.</p>	<p>Meeting to take place to discuss/ agree arrangements for Trustee Strategic Planning Session</p> <p>Risk & Reporting working party meeting to be arranged to discuss updated document/s</p> <p>Safeguarding Update Report to be brought to next Trust Board meeting</p>	<p>D Donnelly / H Stevenson</p> <p>Trustees / D Donnelly / P Roberts</p> <p>D Donnelly / S Black</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>14.10.21</p>	
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	<p>Trust Board Self-Evaluation: Mr Donnelly advised that there had been some confusion regarding this item, he then went on to provide a brief overview of where the process was currently up. Mr Donnelly explained that an updated draft document was circulated to Trustees and discussed at the last Trust Board meeting in July; at the meeting it was agreed that the document should be taken back to the working party for discussion/final agreement. Emails were sent out during the summer and it was agreed to pick this up when we returned in September. Mr Stanton requested a copy of the latest version of the document and noted that he was still happy to lead and do what was required. Following discussion, it was agreed that a meeting poll will be circulated in order to agree a meeting date for the working to meet.</p>	Trust Board Self Evaluation Working Party meeting to be arranged	Trustees / Exec Officers	ASAP	
<p>6. Chair's Action Report (to receive)</p>	<p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Chair's Action & Governor Membership Update 06.09.21 report prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Members: Ms Stevenson noted the recent Members resignations; stating that work on recruitment for these roles should be prioritised. Mr Donnelly then provided Trustees with a brief summary on the role of a Member, and Trustees were asked if they could circulate details to anyone within their networks who may be interested in applying for the role.</p> <p>Individual school LGBs were then discussed (see PART II)</p> <p>Governor Recruitment: Mrs Roberts provided an update in relation to recruitment processes currently taking place.</p> <p>Mrs Roberts reported that nominations have been received from The Heath School's Local Governing Body in respect of the reappointment of Mrs Dawn Bamber and Mrs Marie Warburton. Details have been circulated to Mr Donnelly and he has confirmed that he is happy to bring the nominations to the Trust Board for formal approval. There being no concerns raised the Board</p> <p>RESOLVED: to reappoint Mrs Dawn Bamber and Mrs Marie Warburton for a 2nd term of office (06.09.21 – 05.09.25) in the role of Trust Appointed Governors at The Heath School.</p> <p>Mrs Roberts also asked Trustees whether they were happy for the Chair of the Board to continue to approve any governor appointments via Chairs Action, if and when a Trust</p>				

	<p>Board meeting date is not close enough, and as a result would cause a delay in the appointment. All Trustees in attendance confirmed that they were happy for the CoB to continue to approve governor appointments in these circumstances.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the Chair of the Board can approve any governor appointments via Chairs Action (as and when appropriate)</p> <p>Mr Donnelly also noted that there are so few governor vacancies across the Trust which was heartening to see; Mr Donnelly and the Trustees thanked Mrs Roberts for the work undertaken in order to reach this position.</p>				
<p>7. Coronavirus Update</p>	<p>Mr Parkinson provided an update to Trustees.</p> <p>Mr Parkinson explained that all schools have returned for their 1st full day today; 3 schools returned last week, and the rest this morning. Staff and students have returned to as near normal routines as possible; however, 3 main points are still in place from last term, they are around hand sanitisation, sanitisation of touch points and ventilation. Secondary school students have also commenced with 2 onsite tests which they have been willing to undertake – data will be provided to Trustees in relation to this. Mr Parkinson advised that he is aware of 1 positive lateral flow/antigen test out of the 450 students that have been tested at LHS; and as per government guidance the child was sent home so they could undertake a PCR test. THS have had 3 positive tests since their return.</p> <p>Mr Parkinson advised the Trust will be keeping to the same reporting mechanisms as per last term; and Risk Assessments/Policies & Procedures have been updated to reflect the changes, in particular how to treat those staff/students who have been in contact with someone who has tested positive. The new updated Risk Assessments have been issued to schools. Mr Parkinson also reported that an Outbreak Management Plan is in place at all schools; to be put into action if case numbers increase and measures have to be put in place. Mr Parkinson added that all in all it has been a positive start to the beginning of term.</p> <p>Mr Parkinson also advised that Trustees will continue to receive updates; the plan is to switch to fortnightly reporting but should case numbers begin to rise and become a concern, reporting will move back to weekly updates.</p>				

	<p>Mr Donnelly also spoke about vaccination of secondary aged pupils; noting that the government’s decision is very much in the air currently, but there are major concerns should the government make the decision to vaccinate children, without the need for parental consent, in schools, ie there will be considerable backlash from parents if this was to happen. Discussion followed regarding the contentious nature of this prospect; with Trustees stating that they would expect the government to take the decision to obtain parental consent prior to any vaccinations taking place. Mr Donnelly noted that he would sincerely hope that this would be the case, but if not and the government guidance changes he would need to come back to Trustees to discuss further.</p> <p>There being no further questions/debate, Trustees thanked Mr Parkinson for the briefings they have received over the past months, noting that they have helped to keep Trustees up-to-date. Trustees also agreed with the proposed to move to fortnightly reporting.</p>				
<p>8. CEO Report</p>	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the CEO report (dated September 2021) prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly reported:</p> <p>Year 11 Grades – Mr Donnelly explained that Year 11 TAG data has been circulated to E&S in readiness for their first meeting of the year (09.09.21).</p> <p>Ofsted – Mr Donnelly explained that now that all of our schools within the Trust fall within the Ofsted inspection window there is potential for all schools to be inspected this year. Mr Donnelly added details with regards the internal evaluation in terms of risk, ie Exec Officers do not see any schools being moved into measures; and those that are in measures are expected to move out. Further discussion followed (see PART II).</p> <p>Safeguarding and Health & Safety – Mr Donnelly explained that now class bubbles are not in place, whole year groups are no longer being sent home to isolate; this means disruption is considerably decreased.</p> <p>HR – Mr Donnelly reported that the new HR Officer has been appointed; and then invited Mr Parkinson to provide further details in relation to their role. Mr Parkinson explained that the role is different to the HR Manager role, in that the main tasks are to support schools with casework and ensuring the Trust has effective HR paperwork/</p>				

procedures. The new HR Officer hold CIPD Level 7 qualification, and come from a multi-disciplinary role, which was predominantly healthcare. Mr Parkinson then spoke about the HR Officer's strengths that came through during interview (very organised, methodical and well verse in HR practice/procedure. Mr Parkinson also advised that since starting their position with THF the HR Officer has also been working with Hill Dickinson (Trust Legal Adviser) and their feedback has also been positive. The HR Officer will be meeting all of the Principals on Friday this week, and it is intended that the HR Officer will meet the BF&A committee at a future, and be introduced to Trust Board if needed.

Q: In relation to aligning the staff Terms & Conditions across the Trust, where are we currently up to?

A: Teachers Terms & Conditions are already aligned but there are slight variances between Support Staff Terms & Conditions, ie Sefton and Knowsley staff work 36 hrs per week, whilst Halton work 37 hrs. The default line is that we are looking to align Support Staff Terms & Conditions; there will need to be a consultation process for existing staff, but all new supports staff contracts will be based on the Terms & Conditions that we want to move to.

Q: How quickly are we looking to move towards consultation processes?

A: Over the next 12 months; consultation processes should take place – this will then bring everyone all in line

Exclusions

Q: In terms of Exclusion are there any mitigations for this academic year?

A: It is more to do with us having children back in school and back into their routines; some children found it very difficult when they returned to school following lockdown/ isolation. The increases we saw last year were expected and we are continuing to monitor the situation closely; but with children not being sent home in bubbles, they are therefore able to feel safe/secure within their normal routines / environment.

Governance

Q: With the baskets of measures we have spoken about at today's meeting – how are we assessing Governance as Good?

A: The discussions we have had regarding impact of LGBs is a separate focus area. The grading for the CEO Report is based on what we expect of our LGBs, ie meetings

	<p><i>are quorate, governors are carrying out their duties etc. We have no concerns in relation to our LGBs and they are meeting our expectations and therefore we have graded Governance as Good.</i></p> <p>School Improvement, Interventions & Areas of Concern Q: Although Appeals is on the agenda for E&S later this week, please can you provide a brief summary on numbers received? A: Ms Black has contacted schools and has asked for data to be back to her for Tuesday 07.09.21; initial response show that there are not high numbers (LHS 1 or 2, THS 8, TPS no data as of yet). As soon as all schools have responded, an update will be emailed to Trustees.</p> <p>Complaints – Trustees noted that although this area is in relation to complaints received by the Trust itself, it would be interesting to see what the figures are like across the whole Trust, so that they could gauge numbers of substantiated and unsubstantiated complaints. Mr Donnelly suggested that this could be looked into further during the Risk & Reporting workshop meeting.</p>				
<p>9. Risk/Reporting Update</p>	<p>Mr Donnelly reported that there are no proposed changes to the current Risk Register. Mr Parkinson then put the Trust’s Risk Register on screen and the Trustees reviewed those items allocated to full MAT Board.</p> <p>Risk Item 2: Loss of Members and Directors – it was noted that the resignations of the 2 Members impacts on this item and as such it is a priority for the Trust to identify suitable candidates and appoint as soon as possible.</p> <p>Risk Item 8: Failure to meet terms of FNTI – it was noted that the advance of funds has now been fully paid back (April 2021), and therefore the Trust is on track to have the FNTI lifted. Mr Donnelly reported that this is likely to be following submission of the audited accounts for 2020-21 in December 2021</p> <p>Risk Item 9: Decline in Pupil Numbers – it was noted that numbers at one of the primary schools is more of a focus at this time.</p>				
<p>10. Governance Update (incl</p>	<p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Governance Update Report September 2021 and associated attachments prior to the meeting.</p>				

<p>Trustee Recruitment)</p>	<p>Mrs Roberts provided a brief summary in relation to the items listed within the report.</p> <p>10a) Governance Update Paper – the document was received by Trustees, and the following items noted:</p> <p>Updated DfE Documents/Guidance – a copy of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 document will be circulated to Trustees and a copy will also be uploaded into the documents section on GovernorHub</p> <p>Trustee Governor Training – Safeguarding, PREVENT and Safer Recruitment training sessions will be arranged for Trustees/Governors during Autumn Term 2021 – details will be sent to Trustees/Governors once dates have been set.</p> <p>Mr Smith spoke about imminent changes to legislation, including H&S, Equality/ Diversity, and noted that training/updates in these areas are required in order to keep the Board (and its committees incl LGBs) fully abreast of developments.</p> <p>Q: Are there any other training sessions being arranged for Trustees/Governors? A: We are happy to arrange any training/update sessions that are needed, however we are also mindful of the amount of additional time we are expecting Trustees/ Governors to give to the role. It therefore may be more beneficial in the first instance if we direct Trustees/Governors to online sessions/guidance that is available from external sources, ie The Key, NGA, Governors for Schools, Hill Dickinson etc.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed that this would be a good way forward. Mr Parkinson & Mrs Roberts to source relevant online courses/guidance and circulate to Trustees/Governors as appropriate.</p> <p>Trust Governance Subscriptions – the Trust has renewed its annual subscription with NGA, NGA Learning Link (online training modules), The Key for School Governors and GovernorHub.</p> <p>10b) Trustee Code of Conduct Trustees received a copy of the draft Code of Conduct 2021-22 (track-change and clean versions). There being no changes to be made, Trustees</p> <p>RESOLVED: to approve/agree the Trustee Code of Conduct 2021-22</p>	<p>Governor Code of Conduct to be aligned with the new Trustee Code of Conduct and circulated to LGBs</p>	<p>Mrs Roberts</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	
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	<p>Trustees also noted that the Governor Code of Conduct document will be updated so that it aligns with the Trustee Code of Conduct.</p> <p>10c) Trust Board Committee Terms of Reference Trustees received a copy of BF&A and E&S Committee Terms of Reference documents prior to the meeting. Mrs Roberts explained that there were no proposed changes from the Exec Officers, but asked Trustees to consider whether the number of Trustees required to be in attendance at a committee meeting in order to be quorate (currently this is set at two) still met the Trust Board’s needs. Trustees discussed and agreed that the number should remain at 2 Trustees in attendance for committee meetings; and there being no changes requested</p> <p>RESOLVED: to approve/agree the BF&A and E&S Committee Terms of Reference documents.</p> <p>10d) Trust Scheme of Delegation 2021-22 Trustees received a draft copy of the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation 2021-22 (track change and clean versions) including Appendix 1 High Level Division of Responsibility document prior to the meeting. Mr Donnelly asked Trustees to review the document outside of the meeting and email any comments to either himself or Mrs Roberts within the next week. It was also agreed that if no comments were received, it will be taken that Trustees are happy with the document, and therefore it is approved/agreed.</p> <p>10e) Declaration of Business Interest Forms 2021 This year’s Declaration of Business Interest form has been sent out to Trustees for completion, and that the deadline for their return is 17.09.21. It was also noted that the forms are required so that the Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests 2021-22 can be produced in readiness for audit and published on the Trust website.</p>	<p>BF&A and E&S Committee Terms of Reference to be received by committees.</p> <p>Scheme of Delegation to be reviewed and comments forwarded to CEO/TGM</p> <p>Declaration of Bus. Interest forms to be completed</p> <p>Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests to be produced for 2021-22 and published on Trust website</p>	<p>BF&A and E&S Committees</p> <p>Trustees</p> <p>Trustees</p> <p>Mrs Roberts / Mr Parkinson</p>	<p>Autumn Term meetings</p> <p>By 13.09.21</p> <p>By 17.09.21</p> <p>By 01.10.21</p>	
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11. Policy Update	<p>Trustees received electronic copies of the Policy Review Summary Decision Papers and their associated draft policies in advance of the meeting:</p> <p>Draft Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Statement Freedom of Information Act Policy</p> <p>Mr Parkinson explained that minor changes had been made to the policies to reflect current legislation / guidance received from Hill Dickinson.</p> <p>There being no questions/comments, Trustees</p> <p>RESOLVED: to approve the Trust’s ‘Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Statement’ and ‘Freedom of Information Act Policy’</p>	Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Statement and Freedom of Information Act Policy to be circulated to schools and published on the Trust’s website	Mr Parkinson Mrs Roberts	ASAP	
12. AoB	There were no AoB				
13. Date of Next Meeting	<p>The date of the next MAT Board meeting is Thursday 14th October 2021</p> <p>Ms Stevenson closed the meeting by giving formal thanks to the Exec Officers and their teams for their continued efforts; adding that Trustees look forward to receiving update from the team over the next week.</p>				

Meeting closed at 9.25 am

These minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting

Signed:

[H Stevenson – Chair]

Date: 14th October 2021