MINUTES OF MEETING

Academy:	**The Samworth Church Academy**
Meeting title:	**1st Summer term meeting of the Interim Executive Board**
Date and time:	**15th of June 2026 at 13:30pm**
Location:	**At the Academy**

Membership
'A' denotes absence

Mrs Zarina Connolly (ZC) **Chair**
A Ms Samantha Dennis (SD)
Mrs Jane Lewis (JL)
Mr Martin O'Connell (MoC)
Mrs Teresa Pendleton (TP)

In attendance

Ms Clare Barber (ClB) Executive Principal, The Samworth Church Academy (TSCA)
Mr Carl Bennett (CBe) Head of Academy, TSCA
Mr Sukwinder Bassi (SB). Interim CEO, Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust (SNMAT)
Mrs Sarah Perry. Business Director, SNMAT
Ms Laura Jones, Head of Onsite Alternative Provision, TSCA (for item IEB/66/26 only)
Mrs Heather Heard. Clerk, Governor Services, Nottinghamshire CC

Action

IEB/54/26 Welcome and opening prayer

Zarina Connolly welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Jane Lewis to lead the opening prayer.

IEB/55/26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Samantha Dennis. It was

RESOLVED

that the Board consent to this absence.

IEB/56/26 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

IEB/57/26 Review of membership

Action

The Chair invited the Board to consider Mr Sukwinder Bassi for the vacant position on the Board.

Sukwinder thanked the Chair for this nomination and left the meeting whilst Members of the Board discussed this proposal.

3:35pm Mr Bassi left the meeting.

Members of the Board discussed the appointment of Sukwinder to a position on the Board. It was

RESOLVED

to **RECOMMEND** that, subject to approval by the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust Board, Mr Sukwinder Bassi, in his role of interim CEO, be appointed as a member of the Interim Executive Board.

The Board **NOTED** that the position of Vice Chair is currently vacant.

The Chair proposed that Mr Martin O'Connell be considered for the position of Vice Chair.

Martin thanked the Chair for their nomination and left the room whilst the Board considered this proposal.

13:37 Mr O'Connell left the meeting.

Members of the Board discussed the Chairs proposal. It was

RESOLVED

to **RECOMMEND** that, subject to approval by the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust Board, Mr Martin O'Connell would be appointed as Vice Chair of the Board for the remainder of his current term of office.

13:41 Mr Bassi and Mr O'Connell returned to the meeting

IEB/58/26 Approval of minutes of spring term meeting

The minutes of the spring term meeting held on 24th of March 2026 having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

Review of actions

The actions in the minutes were reviewed; it was **NOTED** that they had been undertaken or were to be discussed in the meeting.

IEB/59/26 Receipt of minutes from accountability panels

This is an Interim Executive Board without accountability panels. This item to be removed from future agendas until further notice. **Clerk**

IEB/60/26 Governor Feedback from GKIT and determine focus for next accountability panels

Action

See IEB/71/26 Standards for areas of curriculum.

Going forwards, elements of school improvement which would normally be reported under the GKIT feedback will be included in the Curriculum / Standards item at each meeting.

IEB/61/26 Executive Principal Report

The Board reviewed the June 2026 KPI Dashboard which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Carl Bennett (Head of Academy TSCA) drew the Boards attention to the following areas of the report and invited questions from the group.

<u>Attendance</u>
Board Members were asked to note the improvements in attendance which reflected the strategic improvements implemented by Tammy Seals (Attendance Lead) and the pastoral support team. Their work to target anxiety related attendance issues and look at the individual children behind the attendance statistics has had a positive impact on the academy's attendance figures.

Attendance figures were presented with and without strike days included as it is understood that some families kept children at home during this period for a variety of reasons.

<u>Behaviour</u>
Board Members were asked to note that behaviour is improving with an overall reduction in both number of suspensions and the number of children who have been suspended at least once during the year. This was attributed to more effective SEND interventions and follow-up activity which is undertaken after a suspension has occurred.

Carl noted that whilst there had been one exclusion during the year the overall position on behaviour is improving.

Clare Barber (Executive Principal TSCA) noted that whilst attendance for Pupil Premium (PP) pupils has been an ongoing issue at Samworth the gap between PP and non-PP attendance appears to be closing this year.

Questions and Challenge:

Q: A Board Member asked whether the behaviour data on the KPI dashboard correlated with that from the internal isolation room?
Mr Bennett confirmed that this had been reviewed and advised the Board that the internal isolation room had been through several transitions since September 2026.

Whilst the space was often over-crowded and difficult to manage processes are being introduced which aim to reduce the number of pupils removed from classes who would then be placed in the isolation room the following day. The latest figures show that the number of removals from lessons has reduced by 2 pupils per week.

Q: A Board Member asked whether a new member of staff had been appointed to manage the internal isolation room?
Mr Bennett confirmed that a member of staff had been recruited to be in this room all day.

Action

It was **AGREED** that whilst the data in the dashboard was useful, the key information required by the Board relates to the interventions and processes which are being implemented, how these are being monitored and what plans are in place to make further improvements.

It was **AGREED** that Mr Sukwinder would meet with Mr Bennett and the Attendance Lead to gain a contextual understanding of attendance at the Samworth Church Academy and report back to the July 2026 meeting of the IEB. **CBe/ SB/ TS**

Areas for discussion would include attendance across the year groups, the differences in attendance for boys and girls and the impact of student's mental health on attendance.

Academy Improvement Plan
Mr Bassi confirmed that he had reviewed the Academy's Improvement Plan with Mr Bennett and key individuals and that this was now ready for circulation to the Board.

The revised plan has been refreshed and refocused and is ready to be implemented from the start of the autumn term (2026/27).

It was **AGREED** to circulate the plan to the Board before the end of the week. **CBe**

Attainment
The Board reviewed the attainment data which is based upon the Y10 mock results. These included:

- No students achieving grades 9-7 across the last 2 years across English & Maths
- Less than 1% students achieving grades 9-7 in English (down from 1.1% last year)
- Only 2% students achieving grades 9-7 in English in 2026 (up from zero in 2025)

Board Members discussed their ongoing concerns in relation to the standards of teaching within the academy

Confidential minute removed.

IEB/62/26 **Finance**

Finance Update report:
Management Accounts 2025-2026 P9:

Board Members reviewed the following reports which had been prepared by the SNMAT Business Director (Mrs Sarah Perry) and circulated in advance of the meeting:

- Finance Report June 2026 – the Samworth Academy
- Management Accounts 2025/26 Period 9
- Budget Forecast Report: 2026/27 – 2030/31

Board Members **NOTED** the contents of the Finance report and the current position of the Academy in terms of income, staffing, other expenditure and a summary position at the end of March (M9).

Action

It was confirmed that the actual position at the end of period 9 (a surplus of £217,722) is an improvement on the previously reported March reforecast of £157,091.

<u>Capital</u>
The Board was asked to approve a proposal to use the remainder of the DFE allocation to cover the costs of premises repairs and maintenance expenditure already incurred and posted to SAM710100 (this includes repair work to toilets, replacing broken windows, replacing lights, electrical remedial works, a replacing the shunt pump and repairing the extraction in the teaching kitchen).

Board Members discussed the options available and it was

RESOLVED

to **approve** the use of the remainder of the DFE allocation as set out in the Finance update report.

<u>Projected Initial Forecast 2026/27</u>

Board Members reviewed the initial forecast for 2026/27.

Sarah confirmed that forecast was based upon the number of accepted Y7 places (as at 21st of April 2026), previous years post 16 admissions, approved staffing changes and ongoing leadership support from West Grantham Secondary until August 2028.

Other expenditure in the initial 2026/27 forecast includes the replacement of AV screens no longer fit for purpose (£4,500) and Clerking from NCC Governor Services.

The Academy's advertising subscription with TES has not been renewed as the Academy will now have access to the 'My New Term' platform which has been purchased by SNMAT for use across the whole trust.

Confidential minute removed.

It was noted that the measure being taken to reduce ongoing costs are building year on year and are contributing to the Academies improved financial position.

The solar panels which are being installed will bring monthly savings on electricity, offsetting a large ongoing running cost.

Q: A Board Member asked whether the assumption that Y7 admissions would remain stable at 190 from next year given the impact which the recent Strike action had had on trust in the school?
Sukwinder confirmed that he would expect the impact of the strike action to be short lived and that admissions would return to previous levels by September 2027.

The Board **NOTED** the current financial position which is positive and improving.

Action

Board Members were asked to approve the projected outturn for 2025/26 and the initial forecast for 2025/26. It was

RESOLVED

to **AGREE** and **APPROVE** the projected outturn for 2025/26 and the initial forecast for 2026-2027 as set out in the "Finance Report June 2026 – the Samworth Academy".

IEB/63/26 Agree and approve proposed budget for 2026/27 that will be presented to the SNMAT Board (if not approved at accountability panel meetings)

See IEB/62/26

IEB/64/26 Alternative Provision

Confidential minute removed

IEB/65/26 Staffing

Item deferred to a later date when Chris Vallance is available.

IEB/66/26 Sixth Form Courses

Laura Jones, Head of Onsite Alternative Provision at the Academy joined the meeting.

Laura provided a written and verbal update to the Board on the subjects which have been considered for the new intake of Y12 students in the Autumn term.

Her report provided an assessment of the viability of each course, based upon current provision (2025/26), previous and predicted results and the number of Y12 students who have expressed an interest in studying the subject at the Academy from Autumn 2026.

Laura confirmed that some BTEC subjects with less than four expressions of interest had been retained in the 'offer' to provide options for students who did not reach expected grades at GCSE.

The Board **DISCUSSED** the contents of the report.

Q: A Board Member ASKED how many subjects each student was expected to select at A Level, and whether the removal of one subject could have a knock-on effect on course viability if several students then opted to study elsewhere?
Laura confirmed that students would normally study three A Levels in the sixth form. She advised the Board that all students who had expressed an interest in a course which was now considered 'not viable' had been contacted to discuss how this would impact their choices.

Q: A Board Member ASKED Laura for their overall assessment of the viability of the courses within the report?
Laura advised the Board that they expected the more academically able students to other education providers when subjects were removed from the options list.

Action

Q: A Board Member ASKED whether the Academy were able to support students who wished to study at more than one provider?
Clare confirmed that this had been accommodated in the past, however it would be a complex process and would require complicated funding arrangements for both providers. It is unlikely that this is a viable option given the number of local providers who are facing challenges with their own financial viability.

Q: A Board Member ASKED how the viability assessment would impact students who are resitting their GCSEs?
Laura confirmed that the arrangements for pupils who are resitting their GCSEs will not be impacted by this report.

Q: A Board Member NOTED the poor results in English and Maths and asked what measures are being taken to improve the performance in these areas?
It was confirmed that performance in English and Maths is an ongoing issue and that work continues to improve this across all areas of the school. Weak outcomes at KS4 are likely to follow through into Y12 teaching as the subjects are being taught by the same department.

Q: A Board Member ASKED whether the sixth form had been sufficiently strengthened over the previous year?
Laura noted that improvements continue to be made and strong processes have been put in place to deliver this. Last year was the best sixth form to date.

Q: A Board Member ASKED whether mock exam results were considered to be a good indicator of success?
Laura noted that this the standard measure used to predict attainment in the main exams however it is not always a good indicator of the results.

Q: Sarah asked how many pupils were expected to join the sixth form at the start of the 2026 Autumn term? Numbers had been estimated at 37, however the destination data suggested this may fall.
Laura confirmed that whilst the overall capacity of the sixth form remained at 75, they expected 37 pupils to join in September 2026.
Carl noted that numbers may change again following results day as students who have not achieved the results they expected at Y11 were less likely to rejoin the Academy for their future studies.

It was **AGREED** that more information was required to assess the viability of the sixth form courses for 2026/27.

It was **NOTED** that the Board would consider whether the Academy was in a position to best serve the needs of these students and should assure itself that it could deliver a quality service that meets the needs of its students.

ACTION: Laura, Carl and Sarah to provide a cost benefit analysis for the sixth form provision in advance of the July meeting of the Board. **LJ/ CBe / SP**
This analysis will include:

- all sixth form running costs
- the number of pupils required to provide a financially viable service
- clarity on any further measures required to deliver the quality of sixth form provision set out in the Academy's improvement plan.

ACTION: Sukwinder to arrange a visit to the sixth form provision with Laura **SB / LJ**

Laura Jones, Head of Onsite Alternative Provision at the Academy joined the meeting

Action

IEB/67/26 **Formally note / approve policies and monitoring method as appropriate**

The Board **RECEIVED** the following SNMAT policies which had been shared in advance of the meeting with a view to their adoption across the Academy:

- SNMAT Complaints Policy (for parents, carers, visitors), December 2025
- SNMAT Data Protection Policy, February 2026
- SNMAT Fraud Policy, December 2025
- SNMAT Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, February 2026
- SNMAT Gifts Policy, December 2025
- SNMAT Staff, Governors and Directors Expenses Policy, December 2025
- SNMAT IT Acceptable Use Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT Social Media Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT Health & Safety Policy, February 2025
- SNMAT Bring your own device (BYOD) Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT E-Safeguarding Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT Educational Visits Policy, February 2026
- SNMAT Cyber Security Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT User Account Security Multi-Factor Authentication Guidance for SLT & Governors, March 2026
- SNMAT Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance, March 2026
- SNMAT Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance Checklist, March 2026
- SNMAT Cyber Recovery Plan. A template for schools, March 2026
- SNMAT Cyber Incident & Disaster Recovery Backup Strategy, March 2026
- SNMAT Cyber Incident & Disaster Recovery Risks, Actions & Mitigations, February 2026
- SNMAT Biometric Data Protection Policy, February 2026
- SNMAT Mobile & Smart Technology Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT Security Camera Policy, March 2026
- SNMAT Students Bring Your Own Device Policy Template, March 2026
- SNMAT Procedure for Receiving and Responding to SARs, February 2026

Q: The Chair asked for clarification on who currently has responsibility for the SNMAT complaints policy? Noting that the current policy contains errors which require urgent review.
Sukwinder confirmed that there is not an individual at the MAT with sole responsibility for all SNMAT policies; however, it has been acknowledged that this should be put in place.

15:33 Mr C Bennett left the meeting.

The SNMAT Board are currently undertaking an urgent review of key policies to ensure legal compliance. This review, carried out by the interim CEO and their support team, will begin with HR policies and be presented to the Trust Board in July 2026.

Sukwinder agreed to add the SNMAT Complaints Policy to the initial phase of the policy review. Following approval by the Trust Board this policy will return to the IEB for adoption. **SB**

The Chair asked members of the MAT to provide assurance that all the policies which have been provided are legally compliant and ready for adoption.

Sarah confirmed that the urgent review will confirm legal compliance, however all policies are currently in use across the MAT and have been previously approved by the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust Board. Where there is no alternative policy in place these should be adopted for use within the Academy.

Board Members were asked to identify any further issues with the policies presented for adoption. As no further issues were raised it was

RESOLVED

to **adopt** the remaining policies for use in the Academy.

3:38pm Mr C Bennett returned to the meeting.

IEB/68/26 Acknowledge / discuss monitoring report

The Board reviewed the GDPR update which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The report identified the circumstances surrounding a number of data breaches and SARs requests which had been handled since the start of the 2025 Autumn term.

Board Members **DISCUSSED** the impact of these requests on staff in terms of capacity.

3:41pm Mr S Bassi left the meeting.

Board Members **NOTED** the decision of the leadership team to send a notification to all staff to complete their GDPR refresher training on or before the inset day in September 2026 INSET days.

IEB/69/26 Review SNMAT safeguarding report and action plan

Board Members reviewed the content of the Safeguarding Audit Report and Action Plan which had been completed by Lindsey Tompson (SNMAT Safeguarding Lead following her visit to the Academy with Jane Brown (SNMAT Safeguarding Lead) on 11th March 2026.

Key findings were that at the time of the audit visit:
- Safeguarding at Samworth did not meet statutory requirements or SNMAT requirements
- There was no clear evidence of a good culture of school wide safeguarding.

Zarina Connolly confirmed that they had reviewed the results of this audit with Dan Preece (Associate Vice Principal, DSL & Team Director of Inclusion) earlier in the day and had a clear view on the issues which were currently within the administrative systems and data.

Teresa Pendleton (Special Educational Needs & Disability Coordinator) agreed that the issues around safeguarding were predominantly focused on the administration of safeguarding data and had arisen following personnel changes.

3:47pm Mr S Bassi returned to the meeting

Action

Carl confirmed that he had received comments on the safeguarding action plan from Sukwinder and would respond as requested before the end of the week. **CBe**

The Chair noted that there is currently no process in place to gain rapid feedback from students as to how safe they feel in school. It was agreed that this should be put in place quickly and the results of the recent ImpactEd survey should be shred ahead of the next meeting of the IEB.

ACTION: Carl agreed to raise the issues with safeguarding administration and the SCR with the Head of HR and to offer of training and support for staff who are responsible for the safeguarding administration. **CBe**

ACTION: ImpactEd Survey results to be shared with members of the Board. **CBe**

ACTION: Student safeguarding temperature check (or similar) to be put in place quickly to gain feedback from students. **CBe / ClB**

IEB/70/26 Christian Distinctiveness

3:57pm Mr S Bassi left the meeting

The Board **DISCUSSED** the challenges facing the school in relation to its Christian Distinctiveness work programme and the need for a more proactive approach in school.

Jane Lewis confirmed that having met with colleagues there was a consensus that changes were required to progress this programme of work.

Clare thanked Jane and colleagues for their support and agreed that there was a need to review the current arrangements.

3:57pm Mr Bassi returned to the meeting

It was **AGREED** that Sukwinder, as Interim CEO of the MAT would contact the Diocesan Director of Education (Nigel Frith) to discuss how this work could be progressed. **SB**

Following a request from Jane Lewis it was **AGREED** that this item would be added to an earlier part of the agenda in future meetings. **Clerk**

IEB/71/26 Standards for areas of curriculum

Zarina Connolly confirmed that following their meetings with Academy staff they would complete and circulate a report on recent school improvement activities and circulate this via GovernorHub, **ZC**

See also:

- Quality of Teaching (IEB/61/26)
- Alternative Provision (IEB/64/26)
- Safeguarding (IEB/69/26)
- Christian Distinctiveness (IEB/70/26)

Action

IEB/72/26 Evidence of governing body impact on school improvement and review of how the governing body has held the school's leaders to account

- The Board has worked collaboratively with the Senior Leadership Team and asked challenging questions about staff accountability, quality of teaching, implementation of behaviour policies and processes, viability of provision in Y12 and alternative provision at The Core.
- The Board are supporting the school to strategically develop their Christian Distinctiveness.
- Board Members have undertaken school improvement visits on Safeguarding and Christian Distinctiveness.
- The Board have worked effectively to bring a breadth of skills and expertise in its membership to support the ongoing governance of the Academy.
- Board Members are well informed of the Academies financial position and are supporting the Academy to achieve a viable long-term position.

IEB/73/26 Any Other Business

The Chair thanked the School Leaders for their tireless work and assured the School Leadership team that the Board is aware of the challenges they face and will work with them to address their challenges.

IEB/74/26 Confirmation of dates for 2026-2027 - to be agreed at the meeting in conjunction with the clerk based upon the SNMAT governance meeting cycle:

The Governing Body AGREED that the next meeting of the IEB would take place on Tuesday 7th July 2026, 9:30 at the Academy.

IEB/75/26 Approval of in-service training days 2026-2027

Deferred to the July meeting.

IEB/76/26 Communication from clerk

Nothing to report.

IEB/77/26 Determination of confidentiality of business

Items of a sensitive nature and those relating to individual pupils or members of staff will be treated as confidential, all other papers to be made available as necessary.

The meeting closed at 4:11pm

Signed .... (Chair) Date ....07/07/2026..............................