

THE MAST ACADEMY TRUST



Meeting	Venue	Time	Date
Trust board	Scissett Middle School	6.30pm	Wednesday 22 nd May 2024

DFE	10357163
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Start of meeting	18:30pm
Close of meeting	20:25pm

Attendance	88%
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Present		In attendance	
Name	Role	Name	Role
Philip Marshall	Chair of Trustees	Sorrel Hellewell	Clerk
Tim Wade	Trustee	Natasha Greenough	CEO
Liz Godman	Trustee	Melanie Humphreys	Executive Lead: Governance, People & Communications
Anthony Wilkinson	Trustee	Gill Senior	Head of School at SMS
Jayne Done	Trustee		
Dorcas Atkinson	Trustee		
Ben Lunt	Trustee	Absent with Consent	
David Webster	Trustee	Name	Role
		Jason Field	CFO
		Philip Oldfield	Trustee
		Absent without Consent	
		Name	Role

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54 Apologies for absent and consent	<p>RESOLVED: Apologies with consent were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philip Oldfield – Trustee <p>Apologies were received from Jason Field – CFO and Gill Senior Trust Safeguarding and SEND Lead.</p>
55 Declarations of interest	<p>RESOLVED: There were no declarations of interest.</p>
56 Confidentiality reminder	<p>Trustees were reminded by the Chair of Trustees that a Trustee role is confidential, and all information and documentation shared should be treated as such.</p>
57 Presentation	<p>Mrs Greenough noted she had met with the local authority department regarding the outline changes in the SEND provision in Kirklees and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority commissioned a review by Peter Gray to look at how funding is allocated and the impact it's having on children. • The local authority has significantly overspent on SEND provision and has been provided with a safety valve arrangement by the DfE. • The DfE won't claim the money back if the local authority has agreed to work with them to resolve the issue. • The local authority is trying to create more special schools. • EHCPs (Educational Health Care Plans) are currently taking months if not years to be looked at and a decision to be made. • The current SEND system isn't working. • It was proposed for the local authority to look at SEND funding in a different way. • The proposal is to set up four hubs and, in each hub, there will be a cluster. Each cluster will be given a certain amount of money and they will decide who receives SEND funding. • The cluster that most of the Trust's schools are in has 19 schools and is the biggest cluster within Kirklees. • Scholes Junior & Infant School is in the Holmfirth cluster and is much smaller. • SENCo's within the cluster will come together and each school will bring their cases and the cluster will determine who will receive funding. • Concerns have been raised regarding parents' views and how the local authority will discuss the new proposal with them.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHCP is a legal plan, meaning the school must abide by the plan but the school isn't guaranteed funding to support the plan. • All schools within the cluster will need to try and make the new proposed system work, and it is going to be implemented. • There are significant risks regarding this proposal and the Trust needs to prepare for this. <p>Q: From a legal perspective, what is the status regarding the money that is been given to the clusters? A: The school has a legal duty to abide by the EHCP but there is no legal duty to fund the EHCP. The overall aim is to get rid of EHCPs to try and get more children into mainstream schools.</p> <p>Q: Is there an advantage for the Trust to be in the larger cluster or will it put them into a weaker position? A: It could be a challenge as there are 19 schools who will all need to try and put their cases forward.</p> <p>Q: What is the accountability regarding funding? A: There is a legal obligation to provide a service and level of care but the local authority must fund it. Parents can take the local authority to a tribunal if their child isn't assessed.</p> <p>Q: It states there is a cluster trialling the new method, do you know how this is going? A: There are some clusters trialling the new method, but no results have been sent out yet.</p> <p>Q: Is there any need to update the complaints policy? A: No but the Trust needs to be aware of possible vexatious complaints. A standard letter could be created that headteachers can have prepared to send out if necessary.</p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted the Trust could develop a SEND handbook for the Trust or the cluster and have criteria set out.</p> <p>ACTION: Mrs Greenough to look at developing a SEND handbook for the Trust.</p>
58 Representation	Mr Marshall noted there is currently no representation to discuss.
59 Notifications of items to be brought up under any other business	RESOLVED: There were no items that were brought up under any other business.

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60	Minutes for the meeting on 20 th March 2024	RESOLVED: All agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 20 th March 2024 are approved as a true record of the meeting.										
61	Matters arising	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #555; color: white;">Minute Reference</th> <th style="background-color: #555; color: white;">Action</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>M43_20032024</td> <td>Mrs Humphreys to add a prioritisation section to the Trust Improvement Plan. RESOLVED: Complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M44_20032024</td> <td>Mrs Hellewell to share the Trust's Transgender policy with all Trustees. RESOLVED: Complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M45_20032024</td> <td>Mrs Humphreys to create a summary statement relating to diversity data and to share with Mr Marshall for approval. RESOLVED: Complete</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M46_20032024</td> <td>Mrs Greenough to arrange a meeting with the chair of governors regarding conversion process. RESOLVED: Complete</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Minute Reference	Action	M43_20032024	Mrs Humphreys to add a prioritisation section to the Trust Improvement Plan. RESOLVED: Complete	M44_20032024	Mrs Hellewell to share the Trust's Transgender policy with all Trustees. RESOLVED: Complete	M45_20032024	Mrs Humphreys to create a summary statement relating to diversity data and to share with Mr Marshall for approval. RESOLVED: Complete	M46_20032024	Mrs Greenough to arrange a meeting with the chair of governors regarding conversion process. RESOLVED: Complete
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62	Organisation updates from collaborative team	<p>The following documents were provided prior to the meeting for Trustee consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO report – May 2024 <p>Mrs Greenough noted the following points:</p> <p><u>Children Commissioner</u></p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted 'The Big Ambition' survey has been completed by the children and the following points came out of the survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel at their happiest, safe and empowered when they are aged 9. • Children feel that they don't get enough information regarding careers. • SEND pupils perception were even lower overall on the survey. • On average a child has a phone at 7 years old. • Only 49% of children are happy with their appearance. <p>The results have shown there is an opportunity for the Trust to be able to harness this information to consider how the Trust can create personal, social and health curriculums and experiences to meet the needs of the children.</p> <p>The government have released new guidance regarding the teaching of relationship and sex education alongside matters which relate to gender identity.</p>										

Feedback from the Trust's information evening

- There were three schools that attended the event.
- The Trust feels the event went well and are conducting follow up calls to gain feedback.

Falling birth rates

- Pupil numbers are looking more positive than previously expected in the schools.

Phonics predications

- National average is 79% and the Trust overall are predicting 88%
- Scholes Junior & Infant School have made fantastic progress over the last couple of months.

Year 6 outcomes

- There has been a slight drop since the early predications in greater depth and it's believed to be due to confidence issues.
- Maths is a weaker area and there will be a push on English next year.

Mrs Greenough noted the pastoral data is looking positive.

Finance update

Mr Wade noted he and Mr Marshall had a meeting with Mr Field the previous day to receive an update regarding the Trust's current finances.

The following points were noted:

- Overall finances are a positive picture, and everyone involved in managing school finances have done a brilliant job.
- A discussion took place regarding the period of purdah due to the General Election being called.
- The Trust year to date has a small surplus but the forecast shows a deficit. This may be overstated currently.
- Support staff proposed pay award is 5.4% and the Trust planned for 3%. The Trust won't receive any additional grants to fund this increase. The pay rise is from April.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increase in staff who are taking shared maternity leave. This will add additional costs for the schools. • The upgrade to Windows 11 is due by 2025. The upgrade is expected to cost around £100,000 • An instant access account is going to be opened which will allow interest to be earned on the balance. • Budget meetings are due to take place in June and the Trust will look at trying to get balanced budgets for each school. <p>Q: The low response rate to the colleague survey is disappointing and possibly concerning - depending upon the reason/s for this. Do you, or do the headteachers perhaps, have any information as to why this might be the case, even if anecdotal? And what steps are you considering with a view to encouraging more responses in future?</p> <p>A: The Trust intend to explore this at the next staff well-being group. The generally feeling is that it could be a case of survey fatigue as we now do 2 a year.</p>
63 Safeguarding	Mrs Greenough noted there has been one safeguarding incident which has been dealt with and there is one open disciplinary which is a suspension but isn't a safeguarding related matter.
64 Trustee updates	<p><u>Visits including assurance visits</u></p> <p>Mr Marshall noted he has completed an assurance visit at Birdsedge First School and attended Birdsedge First School Finance & Operations meeting.</p> <p><u>Training attended</u></p> <p>Mrs Hellewell noted the next training session is the 'being strategic' session which is being held on Tuesday 4th June 2024.</p> <p><u>Other activity attended</u></p> <p>Mr Marshall noted he had attended a governors meeting with a school outside of the Trust and attended the Trust's 'What's it like to be within a Trust' meeting on 1st May 2024. The meeting was positive and it allowed the Trust to meet with three schools who are currently not in a Trust.</p> <p><u>Skills Audit 23/24</u></p> <p>Mrs Hellewell noted the Skills Audit 23/24 and Trust Service provision form has been sent out to Trustees and are due to be completed by Friday 24th May 2024.</p>

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Important documents to note

The following documents had been provided to Trustees prior to the meeting for information:

- Academy Trust Governance Guide
- Summary of changes of the 'Academy Trust Governance Guide'
- Early Years inspection handbook
- Summary of changes of the 'Early Years inspection handbook'

RESOLVED: The Trust Board noted receipt of the documents.

Mrs Humphreys noted the following points:

- There has been an update regarding what should be published on school websites. The Trust already follow all the 'musts.'
- There is some confusion regarding what is a must and what is a should.
- The Trust are waiting for KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) 2024 but do not expect any massive changes.
- There has been an update on the RSE and some new guidance around the music curriculum.

Colleague survey results

Mrs Humphreys and Mrs Greenough noted the following points:

- The response rate was disappointing. Seventy-six colleagues completed the survey this year compared to ninety-nine last year.
- The annual survey which was completed in the autumn term had a completion rate of 52%.
- Discussions need to take place regarding why the response is so low.
- Colleagues noted last year they needed time to complete the survey, and time has been given to colleagues this year.
- The feedback from colleagues changes each year.
- The Trust are looking at moving to having one colleague survey per year in the Spring term and hope the response rate increases.

A discussion took place between Trustees and the following points were noted:

- The survey could be shortened.
- Do staff feel the survey is confidential and they cannot be identified?
- There seems to be a survey fatigue
- There are concerns around why it is not being completed and that the data received does not represent the majority of colleagues.
- The Trust could look at what are the most important

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	<p>questions and could narrow it down to three main questions.</p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted colleagues were given the option to either complete the survey either electronically or via a paper version.</p> <p>The Trust are organising a ‘thank a teacher’ week on the week commencing 17th June. Some ideas for this week are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health checks for colleagues provided by SAS. The Trust are waiting for confirmation of booking. • A consumable gift is being investigated, which could either be a tub of ice cream or breakfast. • Thank you cards have been created to allow colleagues and pupils to write thank you messages throughout the week.
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<p>66 Governance Review</p>	<p>Mr Marshall noted succession planning was pulled out as an area for action in the report. Trustees need to ensure there is succession planning for the chair, executive team, and local governing committees.</p> <p>Mr Marshall suggested for the Educational & People Committee to add succession planning as an agenda item in one of their meetings to receive assurance that the Trust is prepared and job descriptions etc. are ready.</p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted the executive team met last week to look through all the actions that are in the report and an action plan will be written from this.</p> <p>Mr Marshall noted the external governance review report was circulated to Trustees as part of the board papers.</p> <p>Mr Harper joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams at 8.00pm.</p> <p>Mr Harper thanked the Trust Board for inviting him to the meeting and for the Trust allowing him to conduct the review.</p> <p>The following points were noted:</p> <p><u>Key Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust has strong commitment from the Board, Governors, and executive team. • The Trust knows where they want to be, what the challenges are and what they need to do to get there. • There is clarity of the purpose to improve education. • Constantly striving to be better. • The quality of governance practice is strong. • There is a proficient level of challenge and this challenge is welcomed by the executive team. • The quality of financial and operational information
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	<p>provided to Trustees and Governors is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust's commitment to the three-tier education system is great. <p><u>Areas for development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To focus on local governing bodies, especially those who are new to joining the Trust. This will help governing bodies have a better understanding of the nature of the Trust and the scheme of delegation. To look to reduce the quantity of papers at the Trust Board meeting. To promote greater engagement with training. <p>Mr Harper noted the Trust is strong and performing well, and it has been a pleasure to work with them.</p> <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>Q: Within the list of recommendations is there a particular area the Trust Board should prioritise? A: The biggest sections are the local governing bodies, succession planning and training. There is evidence of good training being provided and have had a good take-up but also some not good take up. The Trust needs to look at what has the greatest value and ensure everyone is engaged.</p> <p>Q: Recommendation for risks, is this an opportunity to use a forward lens and get ahead of some of the problems? A: The Trust are already evidencing discussion and horizon scanning regarding how education is changing and these can be captured and put into a specific risk on the risk register.</p> <p>The Trust Board noted their thanks to Mr Harper on behalf of the Trust for all his hard work, attending meetings and reading various documents. The Trust Board will consider the report recommendations with a view to agreeing next steps.</p> <p>Mr Harper left the meeting at 8.15pm.</p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted the next steps are as followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action plan will be brought to the next Trust Board meeting in July. The Trust will meet with governors on Tuesday 4th June to propose the new structure. <p>All Trustees confirmed they are happy with the above next steps.</p>
67 Any other business	RESOLVED: There were no items brought up under any other business.

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<p>68 Future dates for meetings of the Trust Board</p>	<p>RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Trust Board would take place on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 4th June 2024 at 6pm – Being strategic training session. • Tuesday 11th June 2024 at 4pm – Education & People Committee • Thursday 20th June 2024 at 6pm – Finance, Audit & Risk Committee • Wednesday 10th July 2024 at 6.30pm – Trust Board • Wednesday 18th September 2024 at 6pm – Annual Conference <p>Mr Marshall noted the Trust Board strategy meeting will be taking place in Autumn term.</p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted 24/25 dates are currently being finalised and will be sent out to Trustees once completed.</p>
<p>69 Agenda, minutes, and related papers to be excluded from published version</p>	<p>RESOLVED: Matters discussed in item 62 have been excluded from the minutes for confidentiality reasons.</p>

Summary of Actions

Minute Reference	Action
M57_22052024	Mrs Greenough to look at developing a SEND handbook for the Trust.