

THE MAST ACADEMY TRUST



Meeting	Venue	Time	Date
Trust board	Scissett Middle School	6.30pm	Wednesday 21 st May 2025

DFE	10357163
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Start of meeting	18:32pm
Close of meeting	20:50pm

Attendance	75%
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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	Jason Field	CFO
Ian Lakin	Trustee	Melanie Humphreys	EL: OG
Maureen Neill	Trustee		
Ben Lunt	Trustee	Absent with Consent	
		Name	Role
		Phil Oldfield	Trustee
		Jayne Done	Trustee
		Absent without Consent	
		Name	Role

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39 Apologies for absence and consent	<p>RESOLVED: Apologies with consent were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Oldfield – Trustee • Jayne Done – Trustee (Please see agenda item 54 for further information)
40 Declarations of interest	<p>RESOLVED: There were no declarations of interest.</p>
41 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>
42 Presentation	<p>Mrs Greenough presented 'Equalities training' presentation to Trustees.</p> <p>The following slides were included in the presentation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we mean by equality 2. What is our equalities statement? 3. Protected groups / characterises under the law 4. What counts as discrimination? 5. Questions 6. Definitions 7. Unconscious bias 8. Equalities and staff – trustees to ensure policies are compliant 9. How do you check? <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>Q: Has the DfE issued any guidance on blind recruitment? A: There hasn't been any specific guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on blind recruitment. Most DfE recruitment guidance focuses on safer recruitment rather than equality-focused practices like blind recruitment.</p> <p>A discussion took place between Trustees regarding the pros and cons in relation to blind recruitment.</p> <p>Mrs Greenough proposed to remove blind recruitment process due to the ineffectiveness and the difficulty aligning applications with interviewees.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees agreed to remove blind recruitment and to monitor its impact on recruitment.</p> <p>Q: Is the Trust tracking prejudicial incidents effectively? A: Yes, prejudicial incidents are tracked through the CPOMS system and reported termly. Schools are expected to respond to</p>

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	<p>spikes in incidents with appropriate actions (e.g. curriculum changes, assemblies).</p> <p>Mrs Greenough emphasised the importance of addressing unconscious bias in education by broadening children's exposure to diverse experiences and perspectives. The schools are displaying diverse imagery, using inclusive literature and media and are teaching a diverse curriculum.</p> <p>Q: Are there any trends in the changes to those sexist, racist incidents that are happening?</p> <p>A: Yes, there is a definite upward trend, particularly in casual sexism and racist incidents. Sexism, especially from boys toward girls, has increased. Schools are responding with targeted interventions such as curriculum adjustments, assemblies and campaigns.</p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted she has uploaded 'What equality law means for you as an education provider schools' document into the meeting folder prior to the meeting:</p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted there is equalities training via the Learning Link available.</p> <p>ACTION: Mrs Hellewell to upload the equalities presentation into the meeting folder.</p>	
43 Representation	Mr Marshall noted there is currently no representation to discuss and there are no changes to the Trust Board or Members.	
44 Notifications of items to be brought up under any other business	RESOLVED: There were no items brought up under any other business.	
45 Minutes for the meetings on 12 th March 2025 and 7 th April 2025	<p>RESOLVED: All Trustees agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2025 and 7th April 2025 are approved as a true record of the meetings subject to the following suggested amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Greenough noted a few minor amendments for the 12th March 2025 minutes. • The amendment of a date error on the 7th April minutes. 	
46 Matters arising	Minute Reference	Action
	M23_12032025	<p>Mrs Hellewell to send 'Current challenges facing safeguarding across the Trust' presentation to Trustees once available.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Complete</p>

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		Mrs Godman to arrange a time to meet with Mrs Senior to discuss job descriptors. RESOLVED: Complete
	M28_12032025	Mrs Humphreys to have a discussion with Mr Lakin regarding the Link Trustee role at Shelley First School. RESOLVED: Complete
	M30_12032025	Mrs Hellewell to add a training regarding statutory duties around equality on to the next Trust Board meeting agenda, which is being held on Wednesday 21 st May 2025. RESOLVED: Complete. Refer to item 4.
		Mrs Humphreys to send Trustees the link to the 25_30 strategy document. RESOLVED: Complete
		Trustees to read and make comments on the 25_30 strategy document. RESOLVED: Complete
	M31_12032025	The 25_30 Strategy document to be included in the next Trust Board meeting which is being held on Wednesday 21 st May 2025 for discussion. RESOLVED: Complete
47	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"> • Trust update May 2025 • Anti-Fraud and Corruption (including hospitality and gifts) 2025 Policy • Capital and Revenue Reserves Policy • Charing and Remissions Policy • Freedom of Information Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Investment Policy • Risk Management Policy • Mast FARC minutes 27Mar25 <p>Mrs Greenough noted the following points;</p> <p><u>General updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pilot Ofsted inspection under the new framework has taken place today in one of the schools. Senior leaders were allowed to observe the final team meeting. The feedback was positive and provided insight into the evolving framework. • A submission to the DfE regarding audit findings was accepted. • There one live parental complaint which is being managed, which is related to a residential trip. • Sats has taken place and went well.

Executive Team Restructure:

- A proposal to adjust the strategic SEND/safeguarding lead role from part-time to full-time with three days specifically for the middle schools.
- The strategic SEND/safeguarding lead would oversee inclusion across middle schools and expand trust-wide strategy for primary schools.
- This change would be a slight cost increase overall and aligns with strategic SEND/safeguarding lead professional goals.
- The Trust Board's support is requested for this interim arrangement.

RESOLVED: Trustees unanimously support the proposed executive team restructure, including the potential for it to become permanent after an interim period.

Finance, Site and IT

- There is a positive financial outlook with an expected year-end surplus of approximately £800,000.
- The Trust are in a stronger position than many other Trusts due to proactive structural changes.
- There are anticipated unfunded pay awards (3.2%–4%) which pose a significant risk. The government expects trusts to absorb these costs without additional funding.
- The Trust is working to avoid in-year deficits and are exploring efficiencies in central services and procurement.
- A new DfE estates management competency framework is being implemented.
- There are managing a subject access request and Freedom of Information request.

IT

- The IT team are aligning schools with the DfE cybersecurity standards via a new portal.

Trustees noted the current positive financial picture.

Q: Has the CST given any information regarding any other trusts who are planning to not agree with the proposed pay levels?

A: No, they haven't.

Mrs Greenough noted she attended a CST update meeting (around cost efficiencies) and there were recommendations around Trusts having risk protection insurance, the increase in utility costs and for Trusts to prepare for strike action.

Q: Who sets the school's 3-year financial protections?

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	<p>A: The headteacher are responsible to set their own budgets. The Trust have finance business partners that work with the headteachers regarding their budgets. Our guidelines do not allow for in-year deficits. There are three finance and operations meeting which take place throughout the year and it's made clear that schools need to have an in year sustainable budget.</p> <p>Q: If the schools go into deficit how much will they rely on the Trust? A: When a school is struggling financially, they will turn to the Trust for help.</p> <p>Q: In terms of kind of efficiencies across the school are there things that you see that the Trust could do in the next two to three years that could make things more efficient with the use of technology? A: There are things the Trust are doing to make things more efficient. Teaching cost is by far the most significant cost. The Trust have saved money on contracts.</p> <p><u>Governance and Operations</u></p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilisation of a new catering supplier is underway. • There are other procurements taking place which include payroll system and external audit services (due to mandatory rotation every three years). • There are some potential instabilities in one of the Trust's governor committees due to upcoming governor resignations. There are two new governors who are joining the committee with strong educational backgrounds. • The Trust is currently reviewing the appraisal process for the next academic year. • Internal scrutiny exercises have taken place and the findings are generally positive. <p><u>Grange Moor Primary School conversion</u></p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had an Ofsted inspection and received a good grade. • There is strong curriculum planning taking place in most classes. • The executive model in place at Grange Moor is working well and the executive headteacher has made a significant impact. • Staff across Grange Moor and Birdsedge are collaborating effectively. • A proposal would be to combine Birdsedge and Grange Moors governing committees which will strengthen oversight and strategic alignment. • The school has moved from a deficit to a £33,000 surplus this year and is currently forecasting a deficit again next year.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has space capacity (e.g. unused classrooms and a large library), which could support alternative provision or resource base development. • Reception intake has increased from 3 to 11, with a planned capacity of 15. • There are several risks for the Trust if the conversion didn't take place. <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>Q: With the Trust's IT, Site and Finance team working with Grange Moor Primary School, has that put stress on these teams? A: No. The IT infrastructure has been enhanced, business management workloads have been restructured, and site team procedures have been revised to support operations at that location.</p> <p>Q: The projected budget deficit increases from 2026 to 2028, what is the main drive of this? A: It is due to pupil numbers and the profile of these.</p> <p>Q: Will the school property be owned by the Trust or Kirklees? A: Kirklees. It would be leased to the Trust for 125 years.</p> <p>Q: When will the conversion likely to be completed by? A: Potentially December 2025.</p> <p>The executive team recommend proceeding with full conversion acknowledging the greater risk of not converting.</p> <p>A discussion took place between Trustees regarding the decision of the conversion of Grange Moor.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees unanimously support the recommendation to proceed with conversion of Grange Moor Primary School.</p> <p><u>Update from Mr Marshall for the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were several policies approved within the meeting. <p>Mr Field confirmed Mr Oldfield has reviewed the policies that were actioned for him to review.</p> <p><u>Update from link Trustees</u></p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted mid-year review meetings have taken place and the full school review meetings will be taking place in the summer term.</p>
48 Safeguarding	<p>Mrs Godman noted she has met with the Trust's Safeguarding and Send Lead to develop descriptors for link trustee, local governing committees, DSLs within the schools. The aim is to ensure</p>

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	<p>a coherent understanding of safeguarding responsibilities across all levels of governance and leadership.</p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted a disciplinary case heard in January resulted in a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).</p>
<p>49 Trustee updates</p>	<p><u>Visits including assurance visits</u></p> <p>Mr Marshall noted he has completed a health and safety assurance visit. The Trust is generally in good shape. There are a few areas to follow up on but nothing major. The next health and safety assurance review will need to cover the DFE's new estates management standards.</p> <p>Mr Lakin noted he is due to have a catch up with Mr Field regarding the finance structure within the Trust.</p> <p><u>Training attended</u></p> <p>Mrs Hellewell noted the Trust wide development session will be taking place on Tuesday 3rd June at 6pm at Scissett Middle School. The focus for this session is regarding disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.</p> <p><u>Skills Audit</u></p> <p>Mrs Humphreys noted the skills audit will be interactive via the NGA this year. The audit will be completed as a whole group and it is proposed for this to be completed immediately before the next Trust Board meeting. Continued professional development will be built from the results of the skills audit.</p>
<p>50 Trust evaluation and direction</p>	<p><u>Progress update of self-evaluation and improvement plan</u></p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted there is a summary document in the meeting folder.</p> <p>Q: There has been talk about nurseries opening in schools, have there been any discussions regarding this? A: The Trust has been proactive and met with the early years sufficient team. It was noted there are no demand for any places in Kirklees.</p> <p><u>Approval of trust strategy</u></p> <p>Mrs Greenough noted there are two versions of the Trust strategy in the meeting folder. One copy has track changes on it and the other version is the clean version.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees approve the proposed Trust strategy.</p>

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51 Important documents to note	<p>The following documents were acknowledged by Mr. Marshall as noteworthy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estates management competency framework • IT standards for schools
52 Any other business	<p>RESOLVED: There were no items brought up under any other business.</p>
53 Future dates for meetings of the Trust Board	<p>RESOLVED: That the next meetings of the Trust Board will be taking place on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 6pm – Education & People Committee • Thursday 3rd July 2025 at 6pm – Finance, Audit & Risk Committee • Wednesday 16th July 2025 at 6.30pm – Trust Board • Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 6pm – Annual Conference • Thursday 6th November 2025 at 4pm – CST governing a school programme • Thursday 13th November 2025 at 4pm – CST governing a school programme • Thursday 20th November 2025 at 4pm – CST governing a school programme • Thursday 27th November 2025 at 4pm – CST governing a school programme
54 Agenda, minutes, and related papers to be excluded from published version	<p>RESOLVED: Matters discussed in item 47 have been excluded from the minutes for confidentiality reasons.</p> <p>Mrs Humphreys asked for clarity as to whether Mrs Done's absence is with or without consent.? There are exceptional circumstances behind her non-attendance, which we may not be in a position to discuss.</p> <p>It was noted if Trustees are comfortable, this decision can be deferred to the Chair.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Trustees agree for the decision of Mrs Done's absent to lie with the Chair of the Trust Board.</p>

Summary of Actions

Minute Reference	Action
M42_21052025	Mrs Hellewell to upload the equalities presentation into the meeting folder.