

INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL CLERKING SERVICES

The Board of Directors of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors
held at St Mary's College on 23 September 2021 at 5.00pm

PRESENT: Mr C Cuthill (remotely), Mr M Davidson (remotely), Ms R Dex, Mrs L Dyas,
Mr P Fearnley, Mr G Fitzpatrick, Mr M Gallagher, Reverend W Massie, Mr J Sargeant,
Mrs A Ward,

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs M Stead Head of School, St Mary's College
Mrs K Siedle, Chief Operating Officer (COO) Primary
Mrs S Teasdale, Chief Finance Officer

IN ATTENDANCE FOR MINUTES 665 and 666:

Mrs K Bailey, Diocesan Deputy Director of Schools
Mr K Duffy, Diocesan Director of Schools
Mrs E Higgins, Diocesan Director of Standards
Mr P Warren, Secretary to the Diocese Trust Board

Mr R Gilbert, Legal Advisor to St Cuthbert's Trust Board

GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL: Mrs M Gibson, Independent Professional Clerking Services

653 OPENING PRAYER. Reverend Massie opened the meeting with a prayer.

654 APOLOGIES. No apologies had been received for absence (all present).

655 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS. Directors were asked to complete declaration of interest forms and to confirm their eligibility to hold office.

RESOLVED: that the Governance Professional circulate declaration of interest and eligibility forms which were to be completed and returned at the next meeting.

656 ELECTION OF CHAIR. A nomination was received and seconded for Mr Fearnley who left the meeting whilst an election was conducted.

RESOLVED: that Mr Fearnley be unanimously elected Chair until the first meeting of the 2022/23 academic year.

Mr Fearnley re-joined the meeting.

657 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR.

Directors were reminded of the Bishop's wish for appointments of Chair and Vice-Chair to be made from foundation Director members.

Nominations were invited from foundation Directors; none were received.

A nomination was received and seconded for Mrs Dyas who left the meeting whilst an election was conducted

RESOLVED: that Mrs Dyas be unanimously elected Vice-Chair until the first meeting of the 2022/23 academic year.

Mrs Dyas re-joined the meeting.

658 MEMBERSHIP. The Governance Professional advised that she had pursued the contacts forwarded to her; only one application had been submitted to the diocese.

Reverend Massie agreed to follow up contacts he had suggested.

It was proposed for Mr Sargeant to apply to the diocese for appointment as foundation Director to address the current imbalance.

RESOLVED: i) that Reverend Massie follow up contacts he had suggested.
ii) that the Governance Professional forward the foundation Director application form to Mr Sargeant.

Directors were asked to appoint a Director to the Sports Academy Board to replace Mr Davison. The Chair outlined the role pointing out that the Academy was monitored by the Trust Board's Finance, Audit and Capital Assets Committee.

RESOLVED: iii) that Mrs Teasdale be appointed Director to the Sports Academy Board.

659 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE. Directors discussed the impact of future changes to the capacity of the Board. It was proposed to make no changes to the committee structure at this point but review at the next meeting when membership may be more stable.

RESOLVED: i) that the committee structure be unchanged as follows:

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Quorum 3

Membership

Mr Cuthill
Mrs Ward

Reserve: Reverend Massie
Clerk: Mrs Killen
Committee chair: to be elected at each meeting.

Meetings to be held during the school day and convened as required

Terms of Reference

To consider applications for admission to all schools across the Trust, in accordance with the admissions policy adopted by the Trust Board.

Approval of the admissions policy

APPEALS PANEL

Quorum: 3

Membership

Not less than three eligible Directors

Clerk: Mary Gibson, IPC Services

Chair: to be elected at each meeting

Meetings to be held during the school day and convened as required

Terms of Reference

To consider and decide on any appeals against the decisions of Committees of the Board or the CEO

FINANCE, AUDIT AND CAPITAL ASSETS COMMITTEE

Quorum: 3

Membership

Mr Fearnley (chair)

Mr Davidson

Ms Dex

Mrs Dyas

Mr Gallagher

Clerk: Mary Gibson, IPC Services

Chair: to be elected by the Board at the first meeting of the academic year

Meetings to be held after school each half term

Terms of Reference

CAPITAL AND ASSETS

- To monitor the use of the Trust's capital funding, with due reference to the agreed selection criteria.
- To maintain oversight of premises issues, including capital investment, facilities management and community use.
- To ensure the implementation of a rolling programme of repairs and maintenance across all sites, based on identified priorities.
- To make the best use of the Trust's capital assets.
- To insure the buildings.
- To prepare and keep under review the health and safety policy.
- To monitor and evaluate the implementation of the health and safety policy and intervene where necessary.
- To ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and best practice, including monitoring accidents and near misses.
- To monitor Trust-wide ICT provision.

FINANCE

- To ensure the financial sustainability of the Trust.
- To consider indicative funding, notified annually by the EFA, and to assess its implications, drawing any matters of significance or concern to the attention of the Board of Trustees.
- To monitor and review expenditure on a regular basis and ensure compliance with the overall financial plan for the Trust, the financial regulations of the EFA and the Academies Financial Handbook, drawing any matters of concern to the attention of the Board of Trustees.
- To report to the EFA as required.
- To prepare the financial statement to form part of the annual report of the Board of Trustees, for presentation to members and filing in accordance with Companies Act and Charity Commission requirements.

- To recommend a formal budget plan for each financial year, for approval by the Board of Trustees.
- To receive and make recommendations on broad budget headings and areas of expenditure to be adopted each year, including the level and use of any contingency fund or balances, ensuring the compatibility of all such proposals with the development priorities set out in the development plan.
- To monitor school level budget planning and expenditure.
- To ensure funding received is used in accordance with guidance received.
- To report financial irregularities to Members.
- To agree contracts or other binding agreements, in accordance with adopted policies and procedures and in line with delegated levels of expenditure: Trust Board £##; Committee £##; CEO £##. *Refer to finance handbook
- To make payments in accordance with adopted policies and procedures and in line with delegated levels of expenditure: Trust Board £##; Committee £##; CEO £##. *Refer to finance handbook
- To liaise with and receive reports from committees, as appropriate, and to make recommendations to those committees about the financial aspects of matters being considered by them.
- To approve/recommend for approval policies and procedures relating to financial management.
- To approve the scheme for paying governors' expenses.

AUDIT

- To advise the Board on the adequacy of internal controls and value for money systems.
- To review financial statements and reports and highlight any significant issues to the Board of Trustees.
- To monitor and review the effectiveness of financial procedures, controls and internal audit and, where appropriate, make recommendations for improvement. To review risks to internal financial control and agree actions to address those risks.
- To recommend to the Board the appointment of the external auditors.
- To recommend to the Board the programme of independent checks on financial controls and systems.
- To receive auditors' reports and to recommend to the Board action as appropriate in response to audit findings.
- To ensure all relevant reports and management letters are responded to effectively and in a timely manner.
- To keep under review the whistleblowing policy and ensure allegations of fraud or irregularity are investigated.
- Ensure a register of business interests is maintained.
- To ensure the Trust meets the requirements of Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Quorum 3

Membership

Mr Cuthill
Ms Dex
Mrs Dyas
Reverend Massie
Mrs Ward

Clerk: Mary Gibson, IPC Services

Chair: to be elected by the Board at the first meeting of the academic year

Meetings to be held during the school day termly

Terms of Reference

- To oversee payroll and pensions provision.
 - To determine and monitor the implementation of recruitment and retention processes, including DBS and other employment checks.
 - To determine dismissal payments and agree early retirements in line with the Academies Financial Handbook.
 - To agree general employment terms and conditions (not an individual's pay/package) in line with adopted policies.
 - To dismiss / suspend CEO/COO.
 - End suspension of CEO/COO.
 - To ensure the effective management of sickness absence, including the provision of effective occupational health services.
 - To establish the Trust-wide code of conduct for staff.
 - To co-ordinate director training and development.
 - To make decisions in relation to staff pay, in accordance with the agreed Pay Policy.
 - To implement the appraisal and capability process in relation to the CEO.
 - To review and recommend for approval statutory, mandatory and ad-hoc policies in relation to all aspects of school life except those relating to financial management (considered by FCA Committee).
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PUPIL / STUDENT EXCLUSION COMMITTEE

Quorum: 3

Membership

Any three eligible Directors

Clerk: Mary Gibson, IPC Services

Chair: to be elected at each meeting

Meetings to be held during the school day and convened as required

Terms of Reference

To consider permanent exclusions and fixed period exclusions exceeding 15 school days per term.

To direct reinstatement of a pupil/student.

CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Quorum: 3

Membership

Mr Davidson

Mrs Dyas

Mr Gallagher

Reverend Massie

Mr Sargeant

Mrs Ward

All Directors to be invited

Clerk: Mary Gibson, IPC Services

Chair: to be appointed by the Board at the first meeting of the academic year

Meetings to be held during the school day each half term

Terms of Reference

- To ensure statutory requirements are met.
 - To approve the curriculum.
 - To evaluate the impact of the curriculum.
 - Ensure provision for sex and relationships education.
 - To closely monitor and evaluate standards and achievement, including quality of teaching.
 - To approve challenging school-level progress targets.
 - To evaluate Trust-wide standards and progress for all cohort groups.
 - To establish and keep under review academy behaviour policy for pupils.
 - To monitor the impact of the academy behaviour policy for pupils.
 - To approve times of the school day and term dates.
 - To consult annually before agreeing admissions policy.
 - To deal with complaints against the Trust in accordance with the agreed policy.
 - To consider the Trust's obligations in relation to all aspects of safeguarding, including child protection, safer recruitment and e-safety.
 - To make recommendations in relation to safeguarding practice/ provision.
 - To evaluate the impact of the improvement plan and overall school performance, including standards and achievement.
 - To oversee the management of and evaluate the effectiveness of the Teaching School and Health Academy.
 - Monitor chaplaincy provision throughout all trust schools.
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STRATEGIC COMMITTEE

Quorum 3

Membership

(Chair, Vice Chair and Chairs of Committees)

Mr Davidson

Mrs Dyas

Mr Fearnley

Clerk: Mary Gibson, IPC Services

Chair: Chair of the Trust

Meetings to be held after school each term

Terms of Reference

The committee is delegated to make decisions in line with the governing body's scheme of delegation To plan work of the Trust Board and Local Boards in accordance with identified priorities.

- To monitor and evaluate the Trust's business strategy and plan.
- To monitor strategic business risks and opportunities, informed by the ongoing review of the risk register.
- To approve applications for additional grant funding to support development of the Trust.
- To make recommendations in relation to tendering and procurement policy and practice.
- To approve the Trust's marketing strategy, including corporate branding.
- To approve corporate events and conferences.
- To include legal disclosures on the corporate website.
- To contribute to the formulation of the Trust's development plan, through the consideration of financial priorities and proposals.
- To review annually (in the summer term) the scheme of delegation, for approval by the Board and Members.

RESOLVED ii) that during the 2021 autumn term, all Directors be invited to attend all committee meetings except where an appeal may be submitted.

660 SCHEME OF DELEGATION. Directors were reminded that the current Scheme of Delegation had been in place since 2017. It appeared to work well and provided the Board and leaders with the flexibility and accountability to conduct business effectively.

It was proposed that no changes be made to the Scheme of Delegation at this point.

RESOLVED: i) that the recommendation not to make changes to the Scheme of Delegation be supported.

Directors noted that changes had been made to expenditure levels for primary Heads of School to £500 and £10,000 for the Head of School, St Mary's College.

RESOLVED: ii) that changes to expenditure levels be approved, as presented.

661 CLUSTER BOARDS. It was reported that invitations for expressions of interest had been circulated to parents of primary school pupils. It was hoped this would fill vacancies on the Cluster Boards and potentially identify suitable candidates to be appointed as Directors.

In relation to autumn term Cluster Board meetings, it was proposed that Chairs be elected for the meeting; consideration would be given to the appointment of substantive Chairs at the second autumn term meeting of the Trust Board.

RESOLVED: that the proposal for appointment of Chairs of Cluster Boards for the autumn term be approved.

662 REPORTS FROM TRUST LEADERS.

Trust Improvement Plan

The draft 2021/22 MAT Improvement plan was tabled for information. It was explained that the plan would be discussed in detail at committee meetings during the term; feedback and comments were invited.

The CEO emphasised the importance of Directors contributing to the plan prior to it being finalised and approved at the meeting in December 2021.

It was agreed to forward an electronic copy of the plan to Mr Cuthill and Mr Davidson.

RESOLVED: that an electronic copy of the Trust Improvement Plan be sent to Mr Cuthill and Mr Davidson.

Vantage Teaching School Hub

The CEO reported that it had been a busy start to the term and the VTSH was progressing well:

- a strategic board with agreed terms of reference had been established;
- meeting dates had been set;
- an Early Careers Framework lead had been appointed from Molescroft Primary School;
- 23 lead facilitators and 300 participant mentors had been identified;
- details of the National Professional Qualification had been marketed; 36 expressions of interest had been received; and
- 40 schools had expressed an interest in the Appropriate Body process.

St Mary's College

Mrs Stead was welcomed to the meeting and introductions invited.

Reopening of the College

The Head of School reported that bubbles had been retained and wearing of face coverings had been strongly advised when it had not been possible to socially distance; Public Health England had fully supported the action. Communication had been issued to parents weekly and information shared with staff.

The testing centre had been reinstated, testing Year 11 students twice weekly. The current position for Year 11 reported 16 current cases and 13 cases awaiting PCR results; cases in other year groups had been negligible. Communication with PHE had reinforced the safety measures introduced at the start of term. The aim would be to remove restrictions by 4 October 2021 however, this would be determined by guidance received from PHE.

Students had been given access to practical lessons in appropriate rooms; this provided a holistic curriculum experience not available last year.

Attendance

The impact of Covid on attendance had been significant:

	Attendance	% Covid absence	% including Covid	Days missed for Covid 22.09.21
Year 7	97.8	0.57	98.37	23
Year 8	97	0.06	97.06	2
Year 9	96.9	0.15	97.05	5
Year 10	95.7	0.7	96.4	21
Year 11	95	2.16	97.16	61
Whole School	96.6	0.67	97.27	112

Headline Action

- SEF/SIP – would be ready in a near-final format by next week; they would be shared with Directors as soon as possible
- Section 48 planning: the Trust would oversee a practice Section 48 Inspection in early October
- Appraisal update – all staff have had or in the final stages of having their PM review. The format of the meeting had been reviewed to make them more succinct and clearer. CPD for the whole year had been offered as part of the process and the CPD offer would be extended.
- Marking and assessment spreadsheets had been developed with a focus on knowledge retention. They would identify any learning gaps in a precise and cogent manner.
- Exam meetings had been held with all HODs; outcomes had been discussed and analysed. Next steps had been identified and follow-up meetings would start next week. All Learning Journeys had been completed and the SMC Learning Cycle implemented. Curriculum deep dives would begin in October.
- A safeguarding audit had been conducted with Mr Painter from the LA; the feedback received had been very positive; he had been very impressed with record keeping and plans for safeguarding moving forward. A CPOMS Audit would be arranged.

- A KCSIE Policy had been developed across the Trust; this had been sent to Mr Painter for final checking.
- PSHE/RSE – the full year had been mapped out in accordance with the new specifications for PSHE/RSE across Years 7-11; this would be shared with Directors. The first session would be held on 30 September and cover healthy relationships across the school using an age-related programme. All students would be invited to take part in a survey following the session. A previous survey had received 500 returns; no significant concerns had been raised however, it had been believed a further survey would capture far more students' thoughts and experiences which would allow informed action to be taken. The session would also be delivered weekly during tutor time for the 6th Form.
- Extra-curricular: all departments would offer a lunchtime extra-curricular activity by Monday 4 October for Years 7 and 8 initially. This would extend once bubbles can be disbanded. Sports Clubs had been reintroduced at start of the term to all year groups.
- 6th Form: 720 on roll: 400 Y12, 320 Y13.
- Newsletter – Issue 1 would be circulated to all stakeholders tomorrow; copies were tabled for information.

Primary Schools

Mrs Siedle was invited to present an update from the primary schools.

Reopening of Schools

National guidance was being followed and staff were being asked to wear face coverings when not able to socially distance. Staff had been very positive and there had been no expressions of concern from parents.

There had been three positive Covid cases: St Charles =2 Year 6 pupils; St Richard's = 1 member of staff.

Attendance

Current attendance = 96% across all schools.

Celebration

All primary schools had held a 10 minute whole school worship in the halls; this had been the first event of its kind for over one year and had been well received by all who took part; it had been the first experience of a whole school gathering for the younger children who appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed it.

663 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS.

RESOLVED: i) that dates and times of meetings be confirmed as follows:

Autumn 2021

Finance, Audit and Capital Assets - 14 October & 2 December 2021 at 5.00pm

Human Resources - 18 November 2021(may need additional to complete PM reviews) at 1.30pm

Board - 9 December 2021 at 5.00pm

Spring 2022

Strategic - 13 January 2022 at 5.00pm
Finance, Audit and Capital Assets - 20 January & 17 March 2022 at 5.00pm
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning - 1 March 2022 at 2.30pm
Human Resources - 10 March 2022 at 1.30pm
Board - 24 March 2022 at 5.00pm

Summer 2022

Strategic - 28 April 2022 at 5.00pm
Finance, Audit and Capital Assets - 12 May & 7 July 2022 at 5.00pm
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning - 7 June 2022 (may add late meeting to receive primary outcomes) at 2.30pm
Human Resources - 30 June 2022 at 1.30pm
Board - 14 July 2022 at 5.00pm

It was pointed out that as the Board meeting scheduled to take place on 30 September 2021 had been cancelled, there was a requirement to hold a meeting of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee to receive, discuss and analyse outcomes for 2020/21

RESOLVED: ii) that the Governance Professional liaise with the Chair of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee to identify a suitable date and time for a meeting.

ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS.

664 BOARD RETIREMENTS.

The Chair highlighted that the meeting would be the last for Mr Cuthill, Mr Davidson and Mrs Ward who would retire at the end of their term of office in November 2021. He conveyed thanks for their wisdom, guidance and dedication over significant years of service which had covered a number of challenging periods.

The CEO commended the long service of Mr Cuthill, Mr Davidson and Mrs Ward, and stated he was indebted for the significant contribution they had made to catholic education.

The retiring Directors wished those associated with the Trust continued success adding that it had been a privilege to work with dedicated staff and governors/Directors

Mrs Stead was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting.

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Signature of Chair

Minute No	Action	By Who	By When
655	Circulate declaration of interest and eligibility forms	Governance Professional	04.11.2021
656	Appointment of Chair - update records	Governance Professional	04.11.2021
657	Appointment of Vice-Chair update records	Governance Professional	04.11.2021
658(i)	Follow up contacts	Reverend Massie	04.11.2021
658(ii)	Foundation Director application information to JS	Governance Professional	04.11.2021
659(ii)	Committee structure – update records	Governance Professional	04.11.2021
661	Cluster Board arrangements for autumn term – update records	Governance Professional	04.11.2021
662	Electronic copy of TIP to CC and MD	Governance Professional	

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PART B - NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Confidential items covered by the Articles of Association

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signature of Chair