



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**DRAFT MINUTES of the eighteenth meeting of the Directors of the Academy Trust Company duly convened and held at John Mason School on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016 at 5.30pm.**

<b>Present:</b>	Helen Bottomley (HB), Sarah Brinkley (Headteacher) (SB), Simon Burchill (SBu), Barry Graham (BG), Anne Highsmith (AH), Jonathan Hopkins (JH) (from 5.55pm), Mark Timbs (MT).
<b>In attendance</b>	Lucy Foster, Mat Davies, Lorna Wiltshire (SLT). Julian Hehir (JTH) (Clerk).
<b>Apologies</b>	Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Douglas Aitken (DA), Emma Brown (EB), Paul Brooks (PB), Jean Challis (JC), Maxine Evans (ME), Louise Griffin (LG) and Amanda Sissons (AS).

Item		Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Notice and quorum</b>	
	Due notice of the meeting had been given and a quorum was present. BW took the Chair in JH's absence for agenda items 1-6.	Clerk
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
	As reported above.	Clerk
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declaration of Governors' interests</b>	
	No revised or new declarations of interest were declared.	Clerk
<b>4.</b>	<b>Confidential matters</b>	
	There were no matters notified on the agenda that were likely to give rise to the disclosure of confidential information.	Clerk
<b>5.</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February and 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016</b>	
	The minutes of the meetings held on the 24 <sup>th</sup> February and 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2016, including the confidential minutes, were agreed and signed as an accurate record and filed accordingly.	JH/Clerk
<b>6.</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
	24 <sup>th</sup> February – page 2 – Student Council report: three Directors had	

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	<p>attended the Student Council meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March and SB had attended the JMA's annual general meeting.</p> <p><u>Page 5 item 13 – Governing Body business:</u> Strategic ICT update: there was no further information to report at this stage. At the next Board meeting, Directors would receive an update on selected software packages which had been the first priority in the project.</p>	SB
<b>7.</b>	<b>Student Council report</b>	
	<p>MD reminded the Board of the composition of the Student Council. The Council had established a peer behaviour panel; this was designed so that students could pass to teachers incidents of low level disruptive behaviour, for teachers to then decide which of the students responsible for these incidents should appear before the panel. Five students had currently been identified. A form had been devised that gave ten suggestions for sanctions.</p> <p>The Student Council was also developing an environmental policy including measures to remove litter, turn off lights in school and learning walks.</p> <p>In addition JH reported 2-3 student reps will be invited to visit Fitzharrys to meet students there who are associate governors as part of the school's community support committee, for shared information and experience ahead of JMS first such committee meeting to be scheduled in the summer term.</p>	JH
<b>8.</b>	<b>John Mason Association (JMA) report</b>	
	AH reported on the Wizard of Oz production which had raised £95.00. Volunteers were sought for refreshment duties at JMA's events.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Headteacher's report to Governors</b>	
	<p>SB reported to the meeting with reference to papers circulated as follows:</p> <p><u>John Mason School Pupil Premium (PP) Review:</u> the review had been undertaken by Paul James, National Leader for Education using seven lines of enquiry (page 1 of the review report) taken from research conducted by the NfER for the DfE entitled 'Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils'. The over-arching outcome of the review was that the school was making very good progress in the necessary improvements required to raise the attainment and achievement of PP students. Important areas for development included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• student empowerment and responsibility;</li> <li>• a need for coherence in staff training and expectations</li> </ul>	

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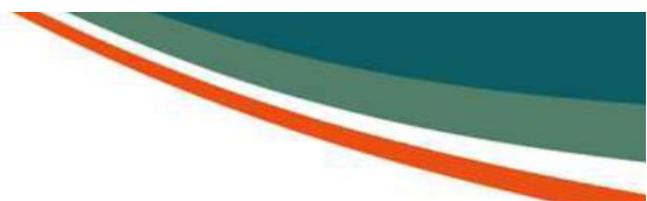
	<p>surrounding quality first teaching, which could be improved;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addressing student behaviour with strategies to secure better attendance;</li> <li>• meeting individual learning needs;</li> <li>• deployment of staff effectively.</li> </ul> <p>SB elaborated on strategies to achieve progress in these areas.</p> <p>In response to comments and questions, SB reported that the next steps would include a further visit by Paul James in the 20<sup>th</sup> May to undertake a full review of teaching and learning, a “student voice” focus day on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, a review of the role of form tutors as the first “port of call” to help to empower students and equip them to take responsibility and be accountable, and whole school training focused on PP strategies. The “pupil planner” for next year had been amended to encourage students to plan ahead better and SB advised on the school’s stance on nutrition and the impact on PP students.</p> <p>JH recommended directors take part in at least one of those school activities in the summer term. Further details will be circulated for directors to take part on 20<sup>th</sup> May as a ‘shadow inspection’ and training in anticipation of Ofsted and in support of SEF (below).</p> <p><u>Self-evaluation (SEF) summary 2016:</u> SB had recently attended an Ofsted briefing on SEFs led by Sarah Hubbard, Link HMI for Oxfordshire (and National Lead for Education). In the event of a one day (“section 8”) inspection being scheduled at short notice it was strongly suggested from the briefing that for each term, key lines of enquiry (KLIs) should be included in the school’s SEF summary. These would have associated key performance indicators and monitoring quality assurance activities. It had also been recommended that the SEF summary should be drafted in aspirational terms and not necessarily according to what historical data demonstrated.</p> <p>SB advised on the processes relating to one day inspections and the triggers for a full HMI inspection. One day inspections mainly comprised of a narrative with Headteachers, including a focus on leadership (senior &amp; middle leaders and Governors) with a short inspection report concerning two areas: safeguarding and whether the school was making expected progress. SB offered a pre-inspection briefing for Directors and the Chair emphasised that it was important for everyone to be</p>	<p>SB</p> <p>JH/SB</p> <p>SB/All Directors</p>
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	<p>comfortable with and able to comment on the KLIs in the SEF, as all Directors could be called upon during the inspection to comment. A good understanding of the SEF by Directors would strengthen the leadership and management of the school.</p> <p>JH added a 'task group' would be set up from directors in support of L&amp;M and to ensure the board is prepared. With regular board updates and also identify any 'gaps' for directors' training or support.</p> <p>In response to further comments SB would add into the SEF's KLI quality assurance activity, measuring the development of staff and the impact of continuous professional development (CPD).</p> <p><u>Changes to the school day</u></p> <p>In consultation with Larkmead and Fitzharrys, the respective Head teachers propose to make changes to the school day. This was in light of observations that the school day lunch break was too long, the morning break was difficult to process everyone through in a short space of time, and the perceived benefits of the impact of DEAR time for PP students. It was proposed that registration time would remain the same but be used with greater focus; lesson 3 would be expanded, lunch would be reduced by 5 minutes, there would be ½ hour DEAR time after lunch for KS3 and there would be a longer lesson 5 to allow flexibility for other substantial activities.</p> <p>It was also suggested that directed time on teaching and learning CPD should in future be undertaken each week during the school day, with the benefit that momentum would build from week to week. This would entail the school day finishing at 2.15pm one day a week (provisionally Wednesdays, when 6<sup>th</sup> Formers have no lessons scheduled, to fit the timetable across the Abingdon Consortium).</p> <p>The suggestion to embed CPD in such a way is based on evidence which suggests that prolonging days had a detrimental impact on workload, recruitment and retention as teachers became more fatigued. Among considerations to be taken account of were the learning time lost for students, but with the proviso that better quality teaching (given the CPD) would raise standards. Childcare was another consideration, but homework clubs would be provided across Abingdon's schools and bus schedules could be re-arranged; and where structured educational provision and community links can be explored to take place over time.</p>	<p>JH/SB</p> <p>SB</p> <p>SB - and all to note</p>
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	<p>The Board was of the view that if among Directors there was broad support for these proposals, parents should be consulted and that data and evidence should be available for doing so which supported the suggestions. Furthermore, it would be very important that consultation with parents happened simultaneously for all three schools. JH proposed a joint group of 2 director/governors from each of JMS and Fitzharrys is convened, to review evidence and recommendations to their governing bodies, and oversee parent consultations.</p> <p>Therefore, it was <b>AGREED</b> that proposals for directed time on teaching and learning CPD to be undertaken in future each week, during the school day, should be explored further by a small group of Governors and that evidence in support of the proposals should be gathered and reviewed to enable a joint recommendation to be made to both the FPP and CWA Committees by the 7<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	Jt. FPP & CWA Cttees
<b>10.</b>	<b>Committees</b>	
	<p>(a) <u>Committee reports and minutes</u></p> <p>(i) <u>Curriculum, Welfare and Achievement – 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016</u></p> <p>The Board received the report of the Committee by way of the minutes that had been circulated beforehand. BG drew attention to the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to homework policy and an agreed process to progress a homework pilot to improve KS3 homework completion rates.</li> <li>• Data: impact of catch up funding.</li> <li>• Pupil premium, behaviour and attendance all of which showed encouraging trends and had been referred to elsewhere in the Headteacher’s report and SEF summary at item 9 above.</li> </ul> <p>(ii) <u>Finance Premises and Personnel – 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016</u></p> <p>JH reported orally on the principle matters considered by the Committee. The financial position was stable and the budget balanced. The Committee had explored recruitment of Maths’ teachers, cross referenced with CWA’s work (above) and the SEF summary (item 9 above). A bid to the EFA for safeguarding measures to secure the</p>	

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	<p>school site in the sum of £133,000 had been successful as had a bid to replace windows in the main building and alterations to doors and stairwells in the sum of £766,000. The Board thanked LW for her work in achieving these bids.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Strategy &amp; Audit – 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016</u></p> <p>The Committee had reviewed the SEF and discussed the prospects for an imminent HMI inspection and the arrangements that would need to be put in place.</p> <p>In confidential session the Committee had been given a brief account of progress on discussions concerning a proposed Abingdon Academy Trust. The Regional Schools Commissioner was encouraging of the proposal; the DfE was broadly supportive in principle to a local trust involving primary and secondary schools with links to the College. There were some concerns about secondary schools’ achievement data but there was adequate time available to consolidate these and the explanation of proposals with local primary schools. A letter to parents from all three prospective partner schools to the local MAT, setting out the general direction of travel towards an Abingdon Town MAT and proposals for discussions with local primary schools, had just been issued.</p> <p>(b) <u>Lead Directors’ reports</u></p> <p>AH and DA had reviewed the safeguarding policy and its detailed application, including communication and understanding. There were aspects of the policy that would be reviewed shortly by FPP Committee.</p> <p>JH and JC had two focused sessions with students from Year 8 (as part of iDay at school) and from the Student Council. These demonstrated good evidence to support student voice activity and to inform plans for students as associate members of the proposed Community Support Committee.</p>	<p>Clerk – send letter to Directors</p> <p>FPP Cttee</p>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Finance and Other Reports</b>	
	There were no reports for further discussion at the meeting.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Governing Body business 2015/16</b>	
	<p>Matters that were identified by the Chair on the agenda included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future strategic direction – update on agreed Chair’s actions</li> <li>• Abingdon Consortium and Partnerships</li> <li>• School improvement and Ofsted</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> </ul>	

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	All these matters had been discussed elsewhere on the agenda and as recorded in these minutes.	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Policy review schedule</b>	
	A revised schedule of policies and review dates had recently been published and the Committees would progress a rolling programme of reviews at the appropriate times.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Governor training</b>	
	The Board briefly discussed a CPD plan for Directors. Internal safeguarding training and learning walks last term were informing the form and structure of a coherent Governors CPD plan, which would be important to have in place as evidence of Leadership and Management for Ofsted.	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	
	There was no correspondence to report.	
<b>16.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	AH reported on her attendance at a recent World ???challenge event.....	
<b>17.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	Thursday 7th July 2016 at 5.30pm.	All
	The meeting ended at 7.37pm	

Minutes drafted 7.50am 22/4/16

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