

The Priestley Academy Trust – Trust Board

Minutes and Actions

Trust Board/Academy	Trust Board
Date	Monday, 24 May 2021, at 18:00-20:00
Venue	Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
Trustees Present (alphabetical)	Javed Ahmed (JA) Ros Garside (RG) (Chair) Abid Hussain (AH) Ashfaq Rahman (AR) Maggie Smith (MS)
Others in attendance	Mathew Atkinson (MA) - PAT Director of Learning & Achievement Kevin Holland (KH) - PAT CEO Michael Horrocks (MH) - PAT CFO Tracey Parry (TP) - PAT COO
Chair	Ros Garside
Clerk to Governors	Charlotte Heap - PAT Clerk and Projects Officer
Papers Circulated	Minutes of previous meeting 22 March 2021 Chair's Actions CEO Report – 24.05.21 CFO Report to FAR Committee meeting 17 May 2021 CC8 Checklist Consolidated mgt accs to 31 March 21 inc cashflow 040521 Centrally Funded Costs Policy IA2021 – Visit 2 – Final Client Report COO Report – 24.05.21

The meeting commenced at 18:01.

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. She also welcomed Michael McCarthy, new CEO, and thanked him for attending to introduce himself to the Board.

Agenda Item	Minutes including agreements, actions and challenges	Action
74/20	New CEO Introduction Introductions were made. Michael introduced himself to the Board and thanked everyone for their warm welcome. The Chair welcomed Michael to stay for the remainder of the meeting. Michael stayed, but did say to ask him to leave at any point if needed.	
75/20	Apologies for absence and their acceptance Apologies were received but not accepted from Sam Keighley.	
76/20	Any other business and requests for Agenda order variations <i>(Only items of urgent business will be heard under this item)</i> Order variation – The CFO stated that Item 85/20 should be the FAR Committee Report, not CFO Report.	

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 15 July 2021

77/20	<p>Declarations of interest for Items on this Agenda There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
78/20	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021 were approved as a true record. As this was a virtual meeting the minutes were not signed but agreement was made that electronic signatures could be included.</p>	Clerk (Done)
79/20	<p>Matters arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda Item 66/20 – The Chair asked if the figures in the CEO report had now been split into teaching and support staff. The CEO reported that the figures were not split in this report due to changing the Management Information System from SIMS to Arbor, but they will be split for the next meeting in July 2021 Item 72/20 – The Clerk confirmed she has emailed the Founder Members with the date of the next Board meeting to be held on 15 July 2021 and the Founder Members will be included in the Teams invite to be sent 7 days prior to the meeting.</p>	CEO Clerk
80/20	<p>Chair's Correspondence and Actions The Chair reported she had been involved in the interview process for the Head of Westbourne.</p>	
81/20	<p>Board Membership The DoLA reported he has spoken to the Founder Members and placed adverts with Bradford Volunteers, Inspiring Governance and Academy Ambassadors. The advertisements have been out a month, however, there has been no interest to date. The CEO stated that as the Trust grows there will be Trustees and Governors from other schools who can join the Board. AR stated Nova Education Trust are having similar issues recruiting and following NGA's guidance on governance roles and terms of office, he has been in touch with Academy Ambassadors for guidance. In the advert for Trustees for Nova Education Trust, it states the option that attendance at live meetings can be done online, in order to attract more people to the role. To support attendance at the FAR Committee meetings and to make sure they are quorate, all Trustees have had to attend the meetings at some point. Therefore, the Trust needs to be actively seeking Board membership. MS suggested contacting Bradford College and Shipley College teacher training staff. MS has contacts at both colleges that can be asked to advertise amongst their staff. The Chair asked for MS to forward their contact details. The Chair stated another option was to approach Born in Bradford. AR asked if there was anyone on the Local Governing Boards that could bring something new to the Board. The DoLA reported there was, however, he is the Chair of three of the Local Governing Boards. He is supporting Atlas' Local Governing Board as the Governors are all new.</p>	MS Chair

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 15 July 2021

	The Chair stated all the suggestions were good and contact details are to be forwarded to the DoLA.	Chair
82/20	<p>Chair's Action The Chair reported that Chair's Actions has previously been questioned. The Clerk has done some research and contacted the NGA.</p> <p>Further discussion followed and it was agreed that Chair's Actions should remain as an item on the Trust Board Agenda, to be used in extreme circumstances only. Going forward it should be removed from the Agendas for the Committees and the Local Governing Boards.</p> <p>An amendment to the Scheme of Delegation needs to be made to reflect this change.</p>	CEO/DoLA/ Chair
83/20	<p>PAT Concerns and Complaints Policy The draft updated policy has previously been emailed to the Trustees for ratification.</p> <p>Trustees agreed the ratification of the PAT Concerns and Complaints Policy.</p>	
84/20	<p>CEO Report Pupil numbers Pupil numbers across the Trust have increased by 355 over the last year, which includes nursery pupils and reception numbers are higher than in previous years. Trustees commented this is very positive, particularly considering they were concerned about pupil numbers falling due to the national birth rate declining. Trustees asked that everyone be thanked for their hard work and thanked the COO for the marketing campaign.</p> <p>Trustees questioned the number of EAL pupils decreasing and asked if this would have an impact on funding. The DoLA reported Pupil Premium numbers have increased in all the schools, and support has been given to families over lockdown. The CEO stated the funding is more for deprivation than EAL, as the ESFA state this is double funding if they received funding for both and there is a new formula to come from the ESFA.</p> <p>Trustees questioned the attendance figures, as the attendance figure required has dropped from 96% to 95%. The DoLA confirmed the required attendance figure is 94.5% and attendance across the Trust schools is lower at 93.1% compared with the national average. The Trust attendance does include 'X' codes used for the families that are stuck abroad.</p> <p>Trustees asked what the strategy was for persistent absentees. The Chair stated this is particularly concerning in terms of the amount of education these children have missed due to COVID-19 as their length of absence is longer and its impact. The DoLA reported some of the children abroad are accessing the remote learning.</p>	CEO/DoLA

Signed:

Ros Garside

Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021

	<p>The CEO stated approximately 15 pupils from Green Lane are stuck in Pakistan and there are a similar number from Margaret McMillan. The remote learning has not got to become an expectation, as the Trust does not have the funding or the staff to provide this long term for families who go abroad at any time.</p> <p>Trustees agreed that the Board will support the decision not to continue to provide remote learning for families if they go aboard during term time, and families will be fined.</p> <p>Staff training Trustees asked how training needs are identified in the schools and is it consistent across the schools. Are schools doing the training together? Reading is a priority and how is this being developed and shared across the Trust?</p> <p>The DoLA reported that when schools send their development plans, he works with them to identify the training needs and the training is joint where the needs are similar. To support development work, all the Trust schools are part of the English Hub for early reading, and they all follow White Rose for Maths.</p> <p>The Chair asked how often the working groups come together.</p> <p>The DoLA reported the working groups have not met during the pandemic, but they normally meet every half term. The Trust is looking to restart this during the second half of the summer term.</p> <p>AR stated the Aim Group has some funding for online training courses for adults aged 19+ and some staff have used this for training staff on wellbeing and first aid. This can also be offered to parents in deprived areas to upskill them. AR will forward the information to the DoLA.</p> <p>Woodfield Primary School The Chair asked for an update on the support provided for Woodfield.</p> <p>The DoLA reported Woodfield is preparing for an Ofsted inspection. A Section 5 would be a big achievement for Woodfield and highlight the impact the Trust support has had. The school has made strong progress in terms of curriculum.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the DoLA and Jo Marwood for their support at Woodfield.</p> <p>Westbourne Headship update</p> <p>The DoLA reported ten application packs for the Headship at Westbourne were requested and four applications were received, of which two were shortlisted for interview. However, no one was appointed as the panel felt the candidates were not suitable for the position. Therefore, the DoLA will continue to provide leadership for half the week and the school will look to back fill some leadership responsibilities in the school and empower the middle leaders until the Trust can appoint a Head.</p> <p>The position has gone back out to advert and one application has been received so far.</p>	<p>AR</p>
--	--	-----------

Signed:

Ros Garside

Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021

	<p>Trustees stated they were pleased the recruitment panel had been brave enough not to recruit and that the school is providing opportunities for staff to step up and grow.</p> <p>The Chair stated that if no one is recruited in this round, the recruitment strategy will have to be looked at.</p> <p>AR added that the timing is difficult time and suggested the Trust contact an agency to head hunt for suitable candidates.</p> <p>It was agreed to wait until September 2021, and if a Head as not been recruited this was an option to take.</p> <p>Safeguarding Trustees questioned the number of pupils at Atlas on CAF/Early Help referrals, compared to the other schools, particularly as this is the smallest school in the Trust. Is the Head better at spotting referrals or is this demographic? The DoLA will have to go back to the school to question this.</p> <p>Trustees further queried there being no children on Child Protection Plans at Atlas, especially in light of the number of CAF/Early Help referrals.</p> <p>Trustees requested further detailed information from Atlas.</p> <p>Marketing and fundraising The DoLA stated that the Trust had held an art event on 21 May 2021 and all the schools, including Woodfield, took part in the art Zoom session completing artwork, which was lovely to see. Further events will be planned for next year to increase the virtual connectedness.</p> <p>Eid cards The Chair reported she had been involved in the Eid card competition. A group of children from each school were also involved in the Teams judging panel and they were brilliant. Thanks also to the teachers involved in each school. A card was selected to be printed and the activity was very enjoyable.</p> <p>School to school support The CFO has carried out a paid deployment to a school in Norwich.</p> <p>Trustees asked how long a deployment takes. Five days are allowed for a deployment, but the longest part is writing the report.</p> <p>DoLA Report The DoLA has been working with the Local Governing Boards and will provide three training courses on: Safeguarding; Budget Monitoring for Governors; Monitoring and Accountability.</p>	<p>DoLA</p> <p>DoLA</p>
--	---	-------------------------

Signed:

Ros Garside

Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021

	<p>A working party has been put together to develop the assessment system for the Early Years Framework. The Trust is in a strong position.</p> <p>All the schools are working with the Burley Woodhead English Hub. The DfE has recommended not using Letters and Sounds moving forward, but all the Trust schools use Letters and Sounds. The English Hub have said to wait and see what the DfE develops.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there was any training available for the Board regarding the new EYFS requirement.</p> <p>It was agreed that an EYFS specialist teacher would give a short presentation at the beginning of the Board meeting to be held in September 2021, with the option of inviting the Local Governing Boards to attend virtually for this presentation.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the CEO and DoLA for the quality of information provided in the report, stating it was good to see the clearer data that has been extracted from Arbor.</p>	DoLA
85/20	<p>FAR Committee Report</p> <p>JA reported the Central Finance Team have picked up the issues highlighted by internal auditor's first report. The internal auditors suggested the Trust has a Centrally Funded Costs Policy. The CFO has put together a policy and this has been reviewed by the FAR Committee and the Committee agreed the policy should be amended to read, <i>"In addition to Centrally Funded Services schools may, by prior agreement, and subject to Trust Board approval, be charged for other products/services that are procured through the Central Team."</i> Paragraph 3.3.2 has been added regarding central procurement of services on behalf of the schools for best value and these may be centrally charged.</p> <p>The Board agreed to sign off the Centrally Funded Costs Policy.</p> <p>JA reported the internal auditor's suggestion that the school census data is to go the Trustees is still under review.</p> <p>Fraud training is to be given to all key finance staff within the Trust and the CFO will go through the training with the Office Managers.</p> <p>The CFO stated the Trust has appointed a finance apprentice to work in the central finance team to take some of the routine matters away from the Finance Officer, allowing the Finance Officer to take on more of the work from schools, such as the budget reports for Atlas. Atlas will not have an Office Manager going forward following their staff restructure.</p> <p>The CFO has completed the CC8 Checklist, and the FAR Committee discussed the points in detail providing a rationale where there was disagreement. The FAR Committee did agree the Trust complies with most of the areas highlighted by the CFO.</p>	

Signed:



Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021

	<p>The FAR Committee looked at budget monitoring and came to the conclusion that the budgets for Atlas, Green Lane and Lilycroft have not changed since the meeting held on 8 March 2021. The reserves for Green Lane and Margaret McMillan are quite high. Margaret McMillan has started to draw down on the reserves, but the reserve is healthy, therefore, there are no issues at this time.</p> <p>As there was no FAR Committee scheduled in July to approve the budgets for 2021/2022, an additional FAR Committee meeting has been scheduled on 28 June 2021 at 7:00pm.</p> <p>The catering contract has been awarded to Mellors and the TUPE process has started for the catering staff. The FAR Committee discussed paying the catering staff the Real Living Wage as a point of principle and the increase would be approximately £10,000 to the catering contract which would be covered by the savings.</p> <p>The internal auditors second visit report has come up with a number of recommendations they felt the Trust needs to address and these were discussed in detail. School trips are discussed at Local Governing Board level but this should come back to the Trust Board level. All employees, including casual staff, need to be given a contract of employment. This mainly refers to staff who have been asked to run summer schools on a temporary basis and the CFO has taken this on board. All expenses claims are to be signed by the Heads. There should be a monthly reconciliation by the CFO of the payroll control accounts. The CFO has now put a control in place. Some staff have two roles within school, therefore, they have two payroll references. The auditors have suggested staff should only have one payroll reference. However, the CFO has processes in place in terms of reconciliation, and for budgeting the accounts they need to have two different payroll reference numbers.</p> <p>JA thanked the CFO and his team.</p>	
86/20	<p>COO Report The COO reported the new Management Information System, Arbor, requires a data flow which details which staff have access to data and this is in hand. The COO and DoLA are to have training to be able to extract further data from Arbor.</p> <p>GDPR There will be some GDPR training, the video link will be sent out by email to staff, including Trustees, Governors and Founder Members.</p> <p>Reportable injuries There have been eight injuries since the last meeting in March 2021. As the guidance is unclear the severely cut finger at Margaret McMillan has been reported to HSE and the COO is awaiting their feedback. The Head is in contact with the parent. The parent has asked for access to the CCTV but this cannot be given due to GDPR. The pupil is back in school. The Health and Safety Consultant does not feel it is a reportable issue to take further.</p>	COO

Signed:

Ros Garside

Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021

	<p>Violence to staff Four of the six reported violence to staff are the same pupil and it was an isolated incident. The pupil's behaviour has deteriorated since lockdown and will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>The other two are the same pupil that has been discussed at previous meetings. The forms have gone to the Health and Safety Consultant and the Trust has asked what needs to be done. The pupil does have SEND needs and should be in a special school and Margaret McMillan is dealing with this. The 1:1 support staff have been training. The Health and Safety Consultant has asked for further reporting and the behaviour needs to be monitored.</p> <p>School Complaints There have been three concerns since the last meeting in March 2021. The Westbourne concern was closed at stage one. The Head responded to the first concern at Margaret McMillan at stage one and the Governors have met and responded at stage two. There has been no further correspondence from the parent and it has now past the consultation period. The second concern at Margaret McMillan regarding an incident in the playground was closed at stage one.</p> <p>Human Resources A Deputy Head has been appointed at Green Lane and the successful applicant will join the Trust in September 2021. The new Office Manager at Westbourne is in place and has been in post for a few weeks.</p> <p>Marketing There have been two further case studies that will be added to the suite of case studies. Lilycroft's new website has now gone live and includes all the statutory information. Work on the Trust intranet continues. The COO has asked an experienced Governor and a new Governor to access the intranet for their point of view and feedback. Once their feedback has been received, the intranet will be rolled out to Governors for use in September 2021. This will mean that all Governors have to use their Trust email address to access the system. The T&A has written the next article for the Trust to be published soon.</p> <p>Buildings The Estates Officer has helped with the next round of CIF bids, but results will not be available until the end of June 2021, therefore, there will not be much time to do any work over the summer holiday. Work on the caretaker's house at Green Lane is going well, however, the extension still requires a roof as it has been difficult to get materials due to Brexit and COVID-19. The completion is due by July 2021.</p> <p>The Trustees thanked the COO for a clear report.</p>	
87/20	<p>Staffing Update Covered by Items 84/20 and 86/20.</p>	

Signed:

Ros Garside

Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021

88/20	<p>Safeguarding and Health & Safety Covered by Items 84/20 and 86/20. The CEO reported the vandalised fence at Westbourne has not been completed to the Trust's specification, but the company are coming back to do that free of charge.</p>	
89/20	<p>Any other business referred from item The Chair asked what the Board can expect in terms of impact and evidence of progress at the next meeting in July 2021, as a summary would be useful. The DoLA reported this has been discussed with Heads. However, as there has been so much disruption, some classes have been closed more than others, it was felt teachers need to be teaching the children. Ongoing assessments will be done by teachers in class, rather than a big assessment, to hand over to their new class teachers. There will be internal moderation from September 2021.</p> <p>The CEO reported he had attended an Ofsted meeting and Ofsted have said not to do a phonics screening but to make sure as much of the teaching has been covered this year.</p> <p>The COO stated she is meeting with the Clerk to schedule the meeting dates for the Trust Board, Committees and Local Governing Boards for the next academic year.</p>	
90/20	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The date of the next Board meeting is: Thursday, 15 July 2021. Meetings to start at 18:00.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending and thanked Michael McCarthy for being involved. The meeting closed at 19:45.</p>	

Signed:

Ros Garside

Name:

Ros Garside

Date:

15 July 2021