

The Priestley Academy Trust – Trust Board

**Minutes and Actions**

<b>Trust Board/Academy</b>	Trust Board
<b>Date</b>	Monday, 28 March 2022, at 18:00-20:00
<b>Venue</b>	Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
<b>Trustees Present (alphabetical)</b>	Javed Ahmed (JA) Joined the meeting at 18:52 Andrew Bruce (AB) Ros Garside (RG) (Chair) Abid Hussain (AH) Ashfaq Rahman (AR) Steve Wadsworth (SW)
<b>Others in attendance</b>	Mathew Atkinson (MA) – Director of Learning and Achievement (DoLA) Michael Horrocks (MH) – Chief Finance Officer (CFO) Michael McCarthy (MMc) – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Tracey Parry (TP) – Chief Operating Officer (COO)
<b>Chair</b>	Ros Garside
<b>Clerk to Governors</b>	Charlotte Heap – Clerk and Projects Officer
<b>Papers Circulated</b>	Minutes of previous meeting 24 January 2022 CEO Report COO Report Governance paper Terms of Reference

The meeting commenced at 18:05.

The Chair opened the meeting, and welcomed all attendees.

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Minutes including agreements, actions and challenges</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>49/21</b>	<b>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</b> No apologies were received. The Clerk advised the meeting was quorate.	
<b>50/21</b>	<b>Any other business and requests for Agenda order variations</b> The CEO raised an item for discussion to be covered under AOB without staff members present.  The Chair requested Item 58/21 to be brought forward.	
<b>51/21</b>	<b>Declarations of interest for Items on this Agenda</b> There were no declarations of interest made.	
<b>52/21</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2022 were approved as a true record subject to the amendments below. Agreement was made that electronic signatures could be included.	Clerk (Done)

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

53/21	<p><b>Matters arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda</b></p> <p><b>Item 40/21 – Trustees asked if there had been any progress regarding contact ratios and the resourced provisions at Green Lane.</b> The CFO reported he had calculated the effect of the staffing on the contact ratio. For the resourced provisions this is 0.2, giving a contact ratio of 0.67 for the mainstream part of the school. When allowing for the impact of the resourced provisions the contact ratio is 0.69.</p> <p><b>Page 1 – Trustees noted a typing error “contract ratio” should read “contact ratio”.</b></p> <p><b>Page 2 – The Chair asked if the safeguarding report had been sent.</b> AH confirmed he had sent the report to the Clerk to be forwarded to Trustees.</p> <p><b>Page 3 – Trustees queried the Trust evaluation and plans and asked is there a timetable for the Trust?</b> The CEO reported the data and the impact is not yet available from the school improvement groups, therefore it is difficult to judge.</p> <p>AR stated it was something he was doing in his own Trust as there are a number of schools within the Ofsted window and he would be happy to share what he is doing for his own Trust. The key areas include governance.</p> <p><b>Item 43/21 – Trustees queried the pupil progress figures in the CEO’s report.</b> Pupil progress was covered in the School Improvement Committee meeting and the information has been added to the CEO’s report. A position paper was tabled at the School Improvement Committee meeting but not the dates. A strategy session is to be held on 24 April 2022 to gather the dates and how they will fit into the Trust calendar.</p> <p><b>Item 44/21-Succession plan – Trustees asked for an update on the progress of the diversity strategy.</b> This is being discussed and will be part of the discussion under AOB.</p> <p><b>Item 47/21 – The Chair stated the Board had asked where there was a gap in the Board’s skills.</b> The CEO reported that HR skills have been discussed in detail. The Trust does not have an HR Director among its members, but members and the Board collectively have considerable HR experience and the Trust does work with Fusion HR.</p> <p>The Clerk explained the matrix only gave a score of one to four, one being the lowest score and no areas for the Board scored one. The lowest score was a two and the Clerk has broken the figures down further to try to show the lower end of the scale.</p>	<p>Clerk (done) Clerk (done)</p> <p>AR</p>
54/21	<p><b>Chair’s Correspondence and Actions</b> The Chair has had a one to one meeting with the CEO.</p>	

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

55/21	<p><b>Feedback following Trust business planning and strategy days</b></p> <p>The CEO reported an overview of the strategy days was included in his report. The CEO thanked everyone for attending the strategy day on 7 March 2022. The strategy sessions included what the Trust has done and where the Trust is at. Strategy meetings were also held with senior leaders, and Headteachers prior to the session with Trustees, and these sessions were very useful. This has been followed up with questionnaires and the CEO will compile the information from the staff voice, central team and governors. The voice responses have been looked at by the executive group and will be built into the strategy. There are key things that can be taken forward and built into the strategy.</p> <p>The COO, Estates Officer and CFO are working on several strategies, but there is still a lot of work to do to understand who we are and where we want to go.</p> <p>What was very clear from the strategy sessions is that community and health are very high on the agenda, as well as education. Filming by the BBC took place at Lilycroft on 25 March 2022 regarding the early identification of SEND and Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). This is to be followed up by a visit to the Trust from the Department of Health as they have heard about the filming.</p> <p>The strategies will be really strong based on the actual needs of all levels of the Trust, and for the Trust to be bigger, better and stronger. The CEO has needed more time to get to know where the Trust is now to make sure the strategy is stronger than it would have been.</p> <p>The CEO has met with pupil eco groups to work on sustainability from the bottom up and for pupils to have a voice.</p> <p><b>The Chair stated the strategy day was positive and really constructive. The lunch was provided by the people who provide the children's lunch which was very good.</b></p> <p><b>Trustees agreed the meeting was a great experience and it was good to meet people and get their views, and having the back story was really helpful.</b></p> <p><b>AR stated he would send the details of the people he is working with to produce a sustainability plan. He added that a reading strategy was discussed in the School Improvement Committee meeting.</b></p> <p><b>The Chair thanked the CEO for his useful overview.</b></p>	AR
58/21	<p><b>School Improvement Committee Report</b></p> <p>AR, Chair of the School Improvement Committee, stated the meeting started by discussing the Headteachers' reports, the front cover sheets and their content. A lot of work has gone into these reports and the Committee was very impressed with the quality of the reports and the information Headteachers are providing the Local Governing Boards (LGBs) and the questions Headteachers are asking themselves.</p>	

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

	<p>The Committee did a deep dive into Atlas Community Primary School as it due to be Ofsted inspected. Atlas has had a number of positive visits lately and the DoLA has worked with the team and Headteacher. The CEO and DoLA feel Atlas is ready if Ofsted visit.</p> <p>There were concerns at Green Lane Primary School regarding the quality of the curriculum and the Committee questioned why that was. The pandemic has thrown lots of changes at schools and core subjects. The DoLA has worked with the Headteacher as to what a better curriculum looks like and how to put that into process.</p> <p>The attendance data was discussed and the number of schools fining parents for non attendance was queried. There was a variability and no correlation to the attendance and the DoLA spoke about why that was and this was an improvement priority. The attendance network and leadership team are keen to develop this area. This may be a person to focus their time on this and to give impact to the strategy across the Trust.</p> <p>The Trust average attendance is 93% which is significantly above the national average. However, attendance at Margaret McMillan Primary School and Westbourne Primary School has been lower but leaders are working with these schools. The DfE are big on children attending school, and this is a critical area for when people are viewing the schools.</p> <p>The Committee discussed where pupils end up when they go to secondary school. This is parental choice but there were some interesting statistics as to where they go. A high number of pupils go to Oasis and One in a Million. This can link into the Trust's wider aspirations for pupils and support them to reach great destinations and doing amazing things such as apprenticeships and going to university. The data for Oasis or One in a Million did not meet the bench mark for university and apprenticeships and the Chair asked how the Trust will help these pupils to get to the next stage, otherwise the great work done by the Trust will be undone when these pupils get to secondary school.</p> <p>The teaching of modern foreign languages (MFL) is variable across the schools and one school does not teach MFL at all. The CEO and DoLA are keen to do more work on this. The White Paper sets out that 90% of pupils are expected to do the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), therefore the Committee discussed developing a MFL network and this will be brought back to the next School Improvement Committee meeting to be held in July 2022 when a network is in place.</p> <p>The school improvement networks are developing middle leaders. The networks have come up with the strategies first and these will be implemented in September 2022 to see real impact next year.</p> <p>Staff appraisals have been done and one early career teacher (ECT) is on a support plan, but there are no major concerns.</p> <p>Regarding outcomes across the Trust, reading is an area that is being worked on across the Trust. Maths is a strength at Key Stage (KS)2 but AR did challenge the data and why it was better than national data. This is due to the expertise across the Trust.</p>	DoLA
--	---	------

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

	<p><b>The Chair thanked AR for his report. The Chair suggested it was worth finding out what experience the secondary schools have regarding MFL, especially Belle Vue as it used to be a modern language college.</b></p>	
56/21	<p><b>CEO Report</b> The CEO reported the Headteacher of Lilycroft Primary School will retire in January 2023 and this was to be discussed in more detail under AOB.</p> <p>The schools have seen a surge in the number of COVID-19 cases. The CEO will keep Trustees updated if anything significant changes. Staff absence is fairly low.</p> <p>The safeguarding audit only raised one issue as red across the Trust and this has been dealt with, which is a great testament to the good work of the schools.</p> <p><b>Trustees questioned the lack of time pupils have been in school during COVID-19 and asked if they were significantly down on where they would have been and are they coping well.</b> One question is where pupils are expected to be. The cohort that is lower is the cohort with a high level of need and SEND. KS2 has been harder hit than KS1. There has been progress with the younger children regarding resilience rather than missed learning.</p> <p><b>Can this be clawed back and can pupils return to the levels prior to the pandemic?</b> Not by May 2022 but in the longer-term, yes. The schools have reserves and can make sure children catch up and there will be interventions for the next couple of years.</p> <p><b>Are the absence figures broken down into the vulnerable pupils and non vulnerable pupils? Are there any concerns with the attendance figures?</b> There is not necessarily one group. The biggest hit is extended leave where families are going on holiday for up to ten weeks, or do not know when they will return. There is nothing that can be done about this.</p> <p>The COVID-19 absences and long-term absences for holidays are being stripped out for attendance leaders to concentrate on those pupils who can come back into school. This is the crux of the matter with attendance. This can have an impact on attendance, long-term absences and socially. But if families want to visit family abroad schools cannot change their minds and strategies have little impact. However, staff can focus on the pupils who stay at home and do not come into school.</p> <p>One challenge to be wary of is that the national attendance figures are lower but as they rise the Trust will have to keep an eye on that to make sure the Trust's attendance figures also rise. There are other illnesses coming through, such as chicken pox and pupils are off for up to ten days, affecting attendance.</p> <p><b>Trustees asked if there are issues with pupils with SEND and Pupil Premium (PP)? The attendance strategies need to be targeted and the wider communication needs to state it is not satisfactory to take extended leave. This has been an issue for a long time. What are the other schools in Bradford doing?</b></p>	

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

	<p>Schools are providing one to one support and targeted interventions. The gaps will not close overnight as pupils have had significant disruption in their learning.</p> <p><b>The Chair stated it is about making the most of the additional funding that is coming in as wisely as possible and asked for an update on this at the next meeting.</b></p> <p>The sponsorship application has been successful and the Trust has been asked to support a primary school in Keighley. The CEO is to meet with the Headteacher to discuss what support will be put in place. The Trust will offer support across all elements of the school to give a flavour of what an academy trust feels like. The CEO will keep Trustees updated regarding the support.</p> <p>The work with the federation of three schools in North Yorkshire will come to an end in the next couple of weeks, but they will buy in one member of staff one day a week for 12 weeks to support with their curriculum. The DoLA and HW will continue to support Woodfield Primary School one day a week until the end of the academic year.</p> <p><b>AB queried Atlas being prepared for Ofsted and asked if Trustees could have a crib sheet of what is likely to be involved with Ofsted.</b></p> <p>Every inspection is different. There is a huge amount of information in the School Improvement Committee and the central team would sign post Trustees to leaders' paperwork. The information includes what Ofsted said at the last inspection, what work has been done and what the impact of that is. A crib sheet can be put together and Trustees can ask for details of training that would be useful.</p> <p>The Clerk to send details of training modules available via the NGA.</p> <p><b>The Chair suggested a summary of the School Improvement Committee information would be useful.</b></p> <p><b>AR stated he had a crib sheet he can share.</b></p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>Clerk (done)</p> <p>CEO / DoLA</p> <p>AR</p>
57/21	<p><b>FAR Committee Report</b></p> <p>JA, Chair of the FAR Committee reported that the Committee went through the minutes of the previous meeting and one or two points were picked up in matters arising, including an update of the finance strategy. The CEO will pull the information from the strategy days and questionnaires together and bring the information back to the whole Board.</p> <p>The level of challenge from the LGBs was discussed, especially with regard to finance. The FAR Committee questioned where finance sits in the Scheme of Delegation and do governors have the skills to challenge Headteachers and senior leadership teams. The Committee is considering moving this responsibility away from LGBs to the FAR Committee. This would be done in consultation with Governors before any steps are taken on the matter.</p> <p><b>What is the way forward in order to change the finance responsibility of the LGBs?</b></p> <p>The Scheme of Delegation needs to be amended and this then reflected in the FAR Committee's Terms of Reference.</p>	

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

	<p>Further discussion followed regarding consultation with the LGBs and changes to the Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p><b>It was agreed this proposal will be further discussed at the next FAR Committee meeting to be held in May 2022 and the CEO would produce a paper to be presented to the Trust Board at the next Trust Board meeting in May 2022.</b></p> <p>The FAR Committee looked at the school budgets for 2021/2022. The LGBs did not meet in January 2022 therefore the budgets have not been revised. However, Lilycroft Primary School and Margaret McMillan Primary School have had a meeting to produce revised budgets. The Committee discussed the individual schools and their surpluses.</p> <p>The CFO explained that there are five different positions within the schools and they cannot be classed together as a group. The Headteachers have found it difficult this year to get their budgets ready by March 2022.</p> <p><b>Does this give Headteachers enough time to recruit for September 2022?</b> The CFO reported that no school is going out for significant recruitment. If anything, the number of staff is being reduced.</p> <p>The FAR Committee discussed leadership which is above the threshold in all schools and this may need to be looked at, but it is not an issue currently.</p> <p>The CFO explained the benchmarking costs of leadership in terms of a percentage is 10%-12%. All the schools' leadership costs are just above this threshold. This is not an issue in isolation as the budgets balance with these leadership costs. The question to ask is what is the impact of the leadership.</p> <p>The support staff pay award was agreed in March 2022 at 1.75% back dated to April 2021. This was approved by the FAR Committee to be paid in March 2022 as changes to the National Insurance (NI) rate come into effect in April 2022 and staff will not have to pay the higher rate of NI on the back dated pay.</p> <p>The question raised during the Committee meeting was that if a national pay increase has already been approved by the FAR Committee does this need to be ratified again. The view was if the pay rise is in the budget and has been nationally agreed, it does not have to come back to the FAR Committee.</p> <p>The CFO explained this is correct from an audit point of view. Trust Board agreement is needed within the budgeting process that can be implemented. However, where a pay award is outside what has been allowed for, it has to come back to the Trust Board for approval.</p> <p><b>The Trustees agreed that if a national pay award had already been agreed and budgeted for it did not have to come back to the FAR Committee to be ratified again.</b></p>	CEO
--	---	-----

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

	<p>The FAR Committee looked at the Risk Register in detail but the new Trustees found it difficult to fully comprehend. The CFO proposed running a short session before the next FAR Committee meeting for Trustees regarding the Risk Register.</p> <p>The investment policy was discussed by the Committee as the Trust has one bank account. The CFO proposed using Insignis that has a number of bank accounts in order to get better interest rates. The FAR Committee discussed this at length but did not reach a decision. It was agreed that further information from other organisations be brought to the next FAR Committee meeting in May 2022 in order to make a decision.</p>	<p>CFO</p> <p>CFO</p>
<p><b>59/21</b></p>	<p><b>COO Report</b></p> <p>The COO reported one Trustee has confirmed they have completed the GDPR training.</p> <p>The COO will resend the link to the Trustees who have not yet completed the training and reminded them to check their email junk folder as the email will come from GDPR.co.uk not herself.</p> <p>There is nothing to be concerned about regarding the Health and Safety in terms of reportable injuries. First aiders are asked to complete a form for any swelling, for example to a knee or head, and if they have applied an ice pack. One incident required an ice pack to be applied to a finger, which was a broken finger and when Health and Safety came there was a form. There are no concerns, but it is important to make sure incidents are reported if anything else happens.</p> <p>Due to issues the Health and Safety Consultant is having, the Health and Safety report is not yet available. Schools have six months to complete any actions and are working on the actions and they will be completed. This is being monitored by the COO and Estates Manager.</p> <p>One school concern has been raised and this was dealt with by a Governor.</p> <p>A verbal complaint has been raised by a parent and this is being dealt with internally by the COO.</p> <p>Regarding staffing, a Data and Finance Officer has been appointed at Atlas and the Finance Officer is working with her to support with finance and the COO is supporting with other areas.</p> <p>Marketing and case studies continue. Green Lane are looking at rebranding and their website will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>Lilycroft's video has been completed and it has been done well. The COO will share the video with Trustees once the school has confirmed it is happy with it.</p> <p>Trustees asked for a more robust policy ratification process at the last meeting in January 2022. The COO's report details the DfEs list of statutory policies and the level of approval, which policies have to be approved by the Trust Board and which can be delegated to the Headteachers or CEO.</p>	<p>COO / Trustees</p> <p>COO</p>

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022



After further discussion, Trustees agreed that as well as the list of policies that require Trust Board approval, the following policies should also be ratified by the Trust Board: Early Years Foundation Stage Policy, Staff Capability Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy and RSE Policy.

The COO will put the agreed policies for review by which Committee and the Trust Board into the policy schedule with the renewal dates for Trustees to look at. Trustees will receive the policies two weeks prior to the meeting for their comments.

Meal selection in classrooms has now gone live. There was a slight delay due to delivery issues. The next menu feedback and planning session with pupils is to be held this week as it is important pupils have a role in that process.

Building and CIF works are continuing and the Estates Officer is working with the schools to make sure they are done on time.

Filtering and forensic monitoring software is on all devices across the Trust provided by Smoothwall. There have been seven alerts since the previous meeting. There are five levels of alerts. Level three, four and five incidents are emailed as soon as they happen. Level three is the lower level, which have included cyber bullying and a member of staff who was researching something for the Forest Schools. These incidents have been dealt with accordingly. The level four and five incidents have been picked up by the Headteachers. The Headteachers have confirmed these have all been dealt and they have spoken to parents and pupils.

**Trustees asked if was just Margaret McMillan and Westbourne that have these alerts.**

The other schools have had alerts at these levels, but as a whole the Trust does not get many alerts. The other schools have been checked to make sure the system is working and it is picking up, the system is very sensitive. One of the incidents was at home and was not a member of the school, it was a parent. Staff do work with parents and pupils around safe use of the intranet at school and at home.

**What was the level five trigger?**

The level five was a pop up of a sexual nature, but this was not initiated by a child. The Headteacher has spoken to the family.

**Are you as the central team happy that these incidents have been dealt with?**

The CEO reported there are some extreme examples and conversations take place with Headteachers. The alerts are sent to the CEO, COO and Headteacher. The CEO will email the Headteacher and the Headteachers speak to the pupils and parents. All the incidents have been dealt with. The cyber bullying was regarding something one pupil was saying to another pupil. The education comes from the alert and the Headteacher will say an issue was found with a platform and will do a workshop with the school about that issue.

**Ofsted inspectors speak to young people and if pupils say they are being bullied and parents echo that, this needs to be picked up with school improvement visits. Trustees suggested that the DoLA build into the school improvement visits time to ask pupils random questions.**

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

	<p>The DoLA reported that he does build this into his school improvement visits and he has asked random questions and this came out well. The DoLA will update Trustees if this changes.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked if the rebranding at Green Lane included being part of The Priestley Academy Trust.</b></p> <p>Green Lane are looking at a new logo and the central team will look at signage. The team will also look at signage across the Trust to make sure there is a presence of the Trust.</p>	
60/21	<p><b>Safeguarding and Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <p>It was agreed this was covered by Item 56/21 and 59/21.</p>	
61/21	<p><b>Governance Paper</b></p> <p>The Clerk informed Trustees that the governance paper would be a standing item on the agenda going forward. The paper is to update all Trustees and Governors on the position of each Board and any vacancies. It provides details as to who has completed certain governance forms, etc. and anything outstanding.</p> <p>The CEO added that the Chair of the Local Governor Board for Margaret McMillan was coming to the end of her second term of office. She is currently studying for a Level 6 governance qualification and due to exceptional circumstances and the pandemic the CEO had previously discussed with the Chair if she could be offered a third term of office.</p> <p><b>The Chair proposed this seconded by AR. AR stated he strongly supported the proposal and a succession plan was needed to enable this Chair to then move up to the Trust Board and it was also suggested she be invited to attend the School Improvement Committee.</b></p> <p>The term of office for the Chair of Westbourne's Local Governing Board is also coming to an end and it was agreed this was to be further discussed by the executive team and added to the agenda for the next executive team meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
62/21	<p><b>Trust Board Committees' Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The current Terms of Reference for each committee do not match the current structure. The Terms of Reference for the School Improvement Committee is titled incorrectly and there are two for the FAR Committee. These have been updated and the two regarding finance and risk have been brought together. Safeguarding has been added to the Terms of Reference for the School Improvement Committee.</p> <p>Trustees queried the quorate figure as being three and believe it should be two out of the three for the School Improvement Committee in case someone could not be in attendance. It was suggested the School Improvement Committee be developed.</p> <p>Further discussion followed regarding attendance, voting and decisions to be taken to the Trust Board, safeguarding and the elements delegated to the two Committees.</p> <p>It was agreed that by September 2022 consultation was needed to facilitate the Articles of Association, Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference, and to look at where finance should fit and what information the Local Governing Boards should receive.</p>	<p>CEO / Trustees</p>

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022

63/21	<p><b>Any other business referred from item 50/21</b> The CEO raised an item that was discussed without staff members present. This was clerked by a member of the Board and recorded in a separate confidential minute.</p>	
64/21	<p><b>Dates of the next meetings</b> The dates of the next Trust Board meetings are: 23 May 2022 and 18 July 2022. Meetings to start at 6:00pm.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone and for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 20:40.</p>	

Signed: 

Name: Ros Garside

Date: 23 May 2022