

The Priestley Academy Trust – Trust Board


**Minutes and Actions**

<b>Trust Board/Academy</b>	Trust Board
<b>Date</b>	Monday, 30 January 2023, at 16:30
<b>Venue</b>	PAT Head Office
<b>Trustees Present (alphabetical)</b>	Javed Ahmed (JA) (attended virtually) Ashfaq Rahman (AR) (attended virtually) Steve Wadsworth (SW)
<b>Others in attendance</b>	Mathew Atkinson (MA) – Director of School Improvement (DSI) Michael McCarthy (MMc) – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Tracey Parry (TP) – Chief Operating Officer (COO)
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Wadsworth
<b>Clerk to Governors</b>	Charlotte Heap – Governance Professional and Projects Officer
<b>Papers Circulated</b>	Minutes of previous meeting 5 December 2022 Finance Update CEO Report COO Report Governance paper

The meeting commenced at 16:39.

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>31/22</b>	<b>Apologies for absence and their acceptance</b> No apologies were received.  The Governance Professional advised the meeting was quorate.	
<b>32/22</b>	<b>Any other business and requests for Agenda order variations</b> No other business was raised.	
<b>33/22</b>	<b>Declarations of interest for Items on this Agenda</b> There were no declarations of interest made.	
<b>34/22</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 were approved by the Trust Board as a true record.  Agreement was made that electronic signatures could be included.	Gov Prof (Done)
<b>35/22</b>	<b>Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda</b> <b>Item 24/22</b> – The CEO reported the further funding has been confirmed and the school budgets have been updated. <b>Item 28/22</b> – Headteachers have been asked to be more proactive in filling vacancies on the Local Governing Boards. Linked to this is the external governance review of the LGBs. The CEO will update the Trust Board once the external reviewer’s report is received.	CEO

Signed: 

Name: Steve Wadsworth

Date: 20 March 2023


36/22	<p><b>Chair's Correspondence and Actions</b></p> <p>The Chair reported he has visited Green Lane Primary School and noted it has some very interesting buildings on site. The Chair has had a monthly review meeting with the CEO.</p>	
37/22	<p><b>Finance Update</b></p> <p>The CEO reported he prepared this report in the Chief Finance Officer's (CFO) absence. Since the CFO's absence started in December 2022, the Finance Officer has stepped up to take on some of the work. The Trust has also taken a service-level agreement (SLA) with the Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT). BDAT are offering a level of support to ensure certain deadlines are met. The central team have also picked up elements of financial procedures, to make sure everything is completed on time.</p> <p>The CEO drew the Trustees' attention to the last page of the report regarding the investment plan set up via Insignis. Since the plan was drawn up, the Trust has completed the trial payment of £100. The investing of £2million has been postponed due to the CFO's absence. This is an opportunity to either use the support from BDAT or wait until the CFO returns. The CEO asked Trustees what they would like to do.</p> <p><b>Following discussion, Trustees agreed that if the CFO's absence was prolonged, a long-term plan was needed.</b></p> <p><b>Have accounts been produced by BDAT to look at? When was the last time the accounts were looked at?</b></p> <p>The Finance Officer has produced the December 2022 accounts with BDAT using the CFO's formulas.</p> <p><b>JA stated that from what he could see, the Board is already aware of the issues and there was nothing new for Trustees to be concerned about. There are falling roll numbers and schools are looking to reduce their pupil admission number (PAN). A medium-term plan is needed to make sure the Trust is sustainable, especially with rising energy prices. The Trust does not want to lose its reserves to energy costs.</b></p> <p><b>Is there any movement on utilities?</b></p> <p>The new contract is below what the Government has provided for support to schools. Therefore, this has not affected the Trust. However, it might affect Miriam Lord Primary School as their current contract runs out on 31 March 2023.</p> <p><b>Can the energy contract for Miriam Lord be merged with the Trust's current energy contract?</b></p> <p>This was not possible. There are two options; to sign an energy contract with the Local Authority (LA) for eight years with a variable price or take the price with the broker that is higher than the Trust's but is workable.</p> <p><b>What is preventing Miriam Lord being included in the Trust's current energy contract?</b></p> <p>The broker is not taking on new customers. Miriam Lord are still in their current contract and only have the two options above open to them. Eventually, Miriam Lord will be brought in on a contract that sits side-by-side with the Trust's energy contract.</p>	

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	<p>The deadline for the cleaning tender has been missed. The COO has secured an extension to the current cleaning contract. Miriam Lord's cleaning staff will TUPE over to Enviroserve. The cleaning tender will go out for a contract to start in September 2023.</p> <p>The risk registers have been looked at in detail. The risk register system the Trust uses is not intuitive and does not do everything that is required. It does not indicate when something is due for review. Therefore, new risk register systems are to be looked at.</p> <p>There are some risks that have not been updated that date back to 2017 and 2019. The CEO will ensure these are updated.</p> <p>The risk register for each school has been updated. Miriam Lord have been given access to the risk register system and their risk register will be brought into the Trust's system and training will be provided.</p> <p><b>Can the system send out alerts?</b> The CEO confirmed no, this is the biggest problem with the current system. Manual diary reminders have to be done.</p> <p><b>AR stated he was happy to share the format of the risk register system used by Nova Education Trust and for the central team to speak to the Trustee at Nova Education Trust that has helped to develop their system.</b></p> <p><b>It was agreed that Risk Registers should be on the next FAR Committee meeting agenda.</b></p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>AR</p> <p>Gov Prof (done)</p>
<p><b>38/22</b></p>	<p><b>School Improvement Committee Update</b> Following discussion, the Trust Board agreed a verbal update was not required at this meeting as all persons in attendance were present at the School Improvement Committee meeting held on 19 January 2023.</p>	
<p><b>39/22</b></p>	<p><b>CEO Report</b> The CEO reported one of the key risks is attendance and the DoSI and himself have discussed working more strategically to support the schools with attendance. During the Atlas Community Primary School Ofsted inspection, the inspectors responded positively to the narrative evidence provided for pupil absences. The schools' absence systems are robust but attendance is still at the top of the Headteachers' updates.</p> <p>Regarding sponsorship, the Trust has been asked to provide ten days of support for a primary school in Bradford who has received a recent Ofsted judgement of 'requires improvement'. The programme of support is to start soon.</p> <p><b>With the challenges the Trust is currently facing, together with the DoSI's time being split supporting Lilycroft and Westbourne, is there capacity to provide the support to this school in the way in which you want to?</b> The central team does not have as much capacity as would be preferred. However, the support is in terms of curriculum and the Trust has some strong curriculum leaders to help with that. This will be a short project. Capacity can be found and it is the right thing for us as a Trust.</p>	

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	<p><b>If it is your curriculum leaders who will be supporting this, it does free up your time. However, all the schools will come into the Ofsted window from September 2023 and the CFO is currently not here, is there capacity?</b> It is a difficult time but it is in hand. We have asked the question of capacity of ourselves.</p> <p>In terms of growth, the CEO it to meet again with a Headteacher from a primary school in Leeds for further discussions. He is to also meet with a Headteacher of a primary school in Bradford who is keen to join the Trust as it shares the same values and ethos as the school. This would open up new opportunities.</p> <p>Some HR issues have been uncovered at Lilycroft that were a risk. The DoSI and Head of School are making sure that policies and procedures are being adhered to.</p> <p>In terms of the strike, out of the six schools: one school will be fully open with no members of staff on strike; two schools will be half open and three schools will be closed as all their teaching staff will be on strike. Cover cannot be sought from an agency so these schools will be closed. If there was a need around a family, their children can be accommodated at one of the other schools.</p> <p><b>What about the pupils on free school meals (FSM)?</b> Each pupil on FSM will take home a packed lunch the day before the strike. If there is a need and this affects the family and social care, the Headteacher will speak to the family to ask what can be done to support the family as the six school sites are close together.</p> <p><b>What kind of numbers are we talking about? Do the schools have to shut? Do you have risk assessments?</b> The CEO confirmed yes, there are risk assessments. In three of the schools all the teaching staff are striking and these will be closed. There are a lot of members of staff in the same union. A lot of work has been done as a group to minimise the effects and the intention was not to close the schools but if there is no teaching staff they will have to. The buildings will not be physically closed, there will be people in the buildings for pupils who do arrive at school.</p> <p><b>When is the first strike?</b> The first strike is on 1 February 2023.</p> <p><b>Have you got a press statement ready?</b> Yes, a short press statement is ready to go.</p>	
40/22	<p><b>COO Report</b> The COO reported that the cyber security work continues to make sure the infrastructure remains secure. A link will be sent to all members of staff, governors and trustees to a training video regarding cyber security which has to be completed by everyone.</p> <p>There is a key risk at Lilycroft Primary School if the condition improvement fund (CIF) bid is unsuccessful for the requirements for the heating. The recent DfE CDC2 condition survey and the Health and Safety audit may support the CIF bid.</p>	

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	<p>Regarding cleaning, Miriam Lord Primary School has given notice to the Local Authority and staff will TUPE over to Enviroserve as of 1 April 2023. This is a council process and the Trust will support with this.</p> <p>In terms of health and safety and reportable injuries, forms are completed and there have been seven incidents since the last Trust Board meeting. The Health and Safety Consultant is involved and keeps the COO informed if there is any action required. An incident at Margaret McMillan Primary School was reported to the COO outside of the reporting time and this is under investigation. All incidents are reported to the unions as part of the Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee (JCNC) meeting.</p> <p>One school complaint has moved to stage two. Parents raised a concern earlier in the year. This is being dealt with and the Chair of the Local Governing Board for Margaret McMillan Primary School is investigating this.</p> <p>There has been one Freedom of Information request. One person requested the same information of four schools around the term Hindu, but there have been no incidences.</p> <p>Twelve requests to recruit have been submitted since the last meeting. Five of these were teaching posts, five support staff posts, an Assistant Head position at Green Lane Primary School is being covered by a secondment and a Deputy Head at Lilycroft.</p> <p>The list of policies ratified by the Trust Board has been included again as this list was confirmed by the Trust Board at a previous meeting and under the previous Chair. It was considered appropriate to look at the list again for SW, as the new Chair, to confirm if anything needed to be changed to the list of policies to be ratified by the Trust Board.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed that there are no changes to the list of policies to be ratified by the Trust Board and those delegated to the executive team.</p> <p>At the JCNC meeting, one union suggested a change to the Pay Policy. Fusion HR are looking into this. This policy will be sent to Trustees outside of the meeting for their formal ratification.</p> <p>Five schools have received information from the DfE regarding Connect the Classroom funding. IT are working on this and will attend a webinar on 31 January 2023 before the forms can be submitted for funding. The COO is working with Strive to work out what funding can be bid for.</p> <p>The COO will share the latest gender pay gap report with Trustees before this is uploaded to the Trust website.</p>	<p>COO</p> <p>COO</p>
<p><b>41/22</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding and Health &amp; Safety</b> It was agreed this was covered by Items 39/22 and 40/22.</p>	
<p><b>42/22</b></p>	<p><b>Governance Paper</b> Ros Garside has been successfully appointed as a Member.</p> <p>A national advert has been placed with Nurole and local advert placed with Headway Recruitment for trustees.</p>	

Signed:



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	<p>Two applications have been received so far and the CEO has made two connections that application forms are to be sent to.</p> <p>A form has been set up on the Trust intranet for trustees, governors and members of staff to complete their declarations of interest form, including the declarations form for the senior leadership teams (SLT) and a form for staff to confirm they have read the various policies.</p> <p>The National Governance Association (NGA) membership is to be renewed and the NGA will be offering targeted training packages for all governors and support for Chairs. There are a number of new governors on the Local Governing Boards and some now have new Chairs. The Trust is to hold a Chair's Forum to support Chairs on 19 April 2023.</p> <p><b>Trustees were pleased the Trust is to hold a network event for Chairs.</b></p>	
<p><b>43/22</b></p>	<p><b>Any other business referred from item 32/22</b> There was no urgent business discussed.</p>	
<p><b>44/22</b></p>	<p><b>Dates of the next meetings</b> The dates of the next Trust Board meetings are: <b>20 March 2023, 5 June 2022 and 17 July 2023</b> Meetings to start at 15:00</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone and for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 17:35.</p>	

Signed:



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20 March 2023