

The Priestley Academy Trust – Trust Board
Company Registered Number: 10410830

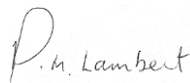
Minutes and Actions

Trust Board/Academy	Trust Board
Date	Monday, 16 December 2024 at 16:15
Venue	Meeting held virtually via Teams
Trustees Present (alphabetical)	Ruby Bhatti (RB) Alex Hallam (AH) Christine Horrocks (CHo) Peter Lambert (PL) – Chair (attended at PAT HO in order to sign financial statements) Steve Wadsworth (SW) Jason Walsh (JW)
Others in attendance	Mathew Atkinson (MA) – Chief Executive (CEO) (attended at PAT HO in order to sign financial statements) Rowena Dixon (RD) – Chief Finance Officer (CFO) (attended at PAT HO)
Chair	Peter Lambert (PL)
Clerk to Governors	Charlotte Heap – Governance Professional and Projects Officer (attended at PAT HO)
Papers Circulated	Minutes of previous meeting – 21 November 2024 2023/2024 Financial statements Terms of Reference for Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAR Committee School Improvement Committee Strategy and Development Committee Local Governing Boards

The meeting commenced at 16:16.

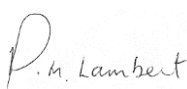
The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees.

Agenda Item	Minutes including agreements, actions and challenges	Action
17/24	Apologies for absence and their acceptance Apologies were received and accepted for Sarah Bradley (SB), Beth Dawson (BD), John Hinchcliffe (JH) and Ash Rahman (AR). The Governance Professional advised the meeting was quorate.	
18/24	Any other business and requests for agenda order variations The CEO presented a PowerPoint providing a summary of the Ofsted inspection at Green Lane Primary School. The CEO reported that the inspection was a Section 5 and all areas had been graded good. The inspection was very positive and robust discussions were held regarding Key Stage Two outcomes and impact. Reading and early writing are a strength at Green Lane. Inspectors could clearly see how the school had moved forward. Green Lane has two Resourced Provisions (RPs) clearly matched to the pupils needs. Inspectors spoke about the Trust, trustees and governors taking tough decisions regarding Green Lane. A lot of work has come to fruition through this inspection. The report is to be shared with trustees once received. The Board collectively congratulated the CEO, senior leaders and the Trust for the positive outcome of the inspection.	

Signed: 
Date: 27 January 2025

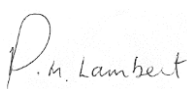
Name: Peter Lambert

	<p>Is there any learning from the two Ofsted inspections completed so far for the management team? The questions asked during both inspections were very similar and were shared following the first Ofsted inspection at Lilycroft Primary School.</p> <p>Are there any improvement recommendations? The school has an improvement area regarding assessment. You get ongoing feedback throughout the process; however, this is the main area of development. The inspectors agreed the school and Trust have an accurate view of the school's strength and next steps.</p> <p>The CEO reported that since the last meeting on 21 November 2024, a second staff survey has been completed, using the same questions. The results of 8 out of the 12 questions were in the top of the quartile relative to national benchmarks, compared to the results of the survey held in April 2024. This is very positive, particularly the work around the new mission and vision for the Trust. The data is now being analysed.</p> <p>What are the plans to reflect on and follow up with the team regarding the survey data? Each school receives a copy of their data. Performance management has come out as being weaker than other areas. The Deputy Heads are currently analysing the data and looking at staff feedback to obtain further detail on where there are areas for improvement. The new PAT Staff Forum will also discuss the results and the actions suggested to move forward. The plans will then be shared across the Trust.</p> <p>Action: Staff survey results to be shared with trustees</p>	CEO
19/24	<p>Declarations of interest for items on this agenda There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
20/24	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2024 were approved by the Trust Board as a true record. Agreement was made that electronic signatures could be included.</p>	Gov Prof (Done)
21/24	<p>Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda All actions have either been completed or are ongoing.</p>	
22/24	<p>Chair's correspondence and actions The Chair reported that he had been involved in the Ofsted inspection for Lilycroft Primary School. He was also invited to take part in the Ofsted inspection for Green Lane Primary School but was unavailable.</p> <p>The Chair attended a DfE webinar for Yorkshire and Humber, discussing the intentions the new Government has for academy trusts.</p> <p>The Chair joined the termly meeting with members, held on 9 December 2024. The meeting was very useful keeping members up to date with governance and what is required of them in terms of recruiting future trustees.</p>	
23/24	<p>FAR Committee update JW, as Chair of the FAR Committee, reported the Committee had scrutinised the financial statements and external auditor's report and that there were no areas of concern.</p> <p>The outcome of the external auditor's report was exceptional and the Chair congratulated the CFO and the finance team, stating it was unusual to have a clean external audit report.</p>	

Signed: 
Date: 27 January 2025

Name: Peter Lambert

	<p>The FAR Committee raised questions for the external auditor that were answered during the meeting. There are a couple of minor control issues for the central team and all the actions have been addressed.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the various saving accounts. The Trust remains in a strong financial position and 2023/2024 was better than forecast.</p> <p>Funding is volatile for 2024/2025, but the Trust was close to financial outturn for this academic year. Little has changed in the overall picture.</p> <p>Two companies have expressed interest in the tender for the external auditor for the next three years. A recommendation will be made to members in the new year.</p> <p>Internal scrutiny reports have been received for financial procedures and cyber security. The financial procedures report provides medium term assurance with no high priority recommendations and the actions have been carried out.</p> <p>The cyber security report again provides medium term assurance and all actions have been followed up. One recommendation raised was regarding the state of the schools' server rooms. Therefore, the Committee agreed one action for trustees to look at the schools' server rooms during school visits to make sure these are tidy.</p> <p>The three areas of focus for the internal audit for 2024/2025 are: procurement, census and special, educational needs and disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>The meeting thanked the CFO for her leadership. The Committee asked that the outcome be celebrated and their thanks be passed to all the members of the central finance team and school finance teams for their hard work and impact.</p> <p>Action: All members of finance teams to be congratulated and thanked for their work on the external audit</p>	CFO
24/24	<p>Financial statements</p> <p>The CFO confirmed the financial statements were reviewed at length with the external auditor during the FAR Committee meeting held on 2 December 2024 and that the FAR Committee agreed to recommend to the Trust Board that the financial statements for 2023/2024 be signed.</p> <p>The Trust Board approved the signing of the financial statements for 2023/2024. The financial statements were signed by the Chair and CEO, as Accounting Officer, at the end of the meeting to be sent to the external auditors.</p>	
25/24	<p>Finalisation of Committee membership</p> <p>The Chair thanked for trustees for providing their feedback to the Governance Professional.</p> <p>Members of the Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) Committee are JW as Chair, JH as Vice Chair and SW. Members of the School Improvement Committee are currently AR as Chair, SB to step into being Interim Chair when AR steps down at the end of January 2025, BD, CHo and PL. Members of the Strategy and Development Committee are RB, AH, SW and JW.</p>	

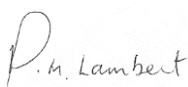
Signed: 
Date: 27 January 2025

Name: Peter Lambert

	<p>It was agreed that SB would step down from the Strategy and Development Committee as she has put herself forward as Interim Chair of the School Improvement Committee.</p> <p>The first meetings of the School Improvement Committee and Strategy and Development Committee are to elect a Chair.</p> <p>Action: AH to work with the Governance Professional to set up the initial meeting of the Strategy and Development Committee to agree the Terms of Reference</p>	AH/Gov Prof
26/24	<p>Terms of Reference for Committees for Approval</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed to remove the sentence regarding the FAR Committee Chair not being able to sit on other Committees. It was also agreed to remove the reference to an estates strategy from the Strategy and Development Committee Terms of Reference, as estates is to be covered by the FAR Committee.</p> <p>Subject to the above amendments, the Terms of Reference for the FAR Committee, School Improvement Committee and Local Governing Boards were approved.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the Strategy and Development Committee are to be agreed at the first meeting of the Committee to be held in January 2025.</p> <p>Action: Terms of Reference to be amended and published</p>	Gov Prof
27/24	<p>Any other business referred from item 02/24</p> <p>There was no other urgent business discussed.</p>	
28/24	<p>Dates for the next meetings (meetings to start at 16:15):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monday, 27 January 2025 at 5:30pm, following AGM at 4:15pm - PAT HO Monday, 24 March 2025 - online via Teams Monday, 2 June 2025 - PAT HO Monday, 14 July 2025 - online via Teams <p>Prior to the meetings to be held on 27 January 2025, trustees are invited to visit Atlas Community Primary School and Green Lane Primary School. The group will be split in half and each group will visit one school. Following discussion, it was agreed this should also provide an opportunity for headteachers to give their feedback to trustees and for headteachers to ask what support they would like.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the CEO and CFO and their teams for the progress that has been made across the Trust.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 16:51.</p>	

Outstanding actions:

Agenda Item	Action	By who	By when	Completed
18/24	Staff survey results to be shared with trustees	CEO	27.01.2025	
23/24	All members of finance teams to be congratulated and thanked for their work on the external audit	CFO	20.12.2024	
25/24	Initial meeting of the Strategy and Development to be set up to agree the Terms of Reference	AH/Gov Prof	31.01.2025	
26/24	Terms of Reference to be amended and published	Gov Prof	31.01.2025	

Signed: 
Date: 27 January 2025

Name: Peter Lambert