



MINUTES OF TRUST BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday 1st October 2025
Time: 10.00am
Venue: Laurus Trust- Boardroom

Clerk: N Burgess
Present: J Crawford, S Mellor, A Gilmour, N Thompson, G Turnpenney, T Little, L Woolley, C Nevin, D Woolley, W Mason, L Magrath, M Vevers, D Kershaw, D Brown and S McGill (via Teams)

	Action	Initials
1	To inform the Clerk of any changes to the register of business interests	All
1	To verify identification with Companies House and send code to Clerk	All
1	Send individual training reminders	NB
1	Update on funding opportunities	RK
2	Send completed records of visits to the Clerk for retention	All

Agenda – Part 1				
Category	Item	Notes	Action	
1	Governance Arrangements	Apologies	Apologies were received and accepted from R Kumar.	
		AOB items	There were no additional items of business which were not already covered by the agenda for this meeting.	
		Declarations of interest	There were no declarations of interest made in any of the agenda items.	
		Register of Business interests	Trustees were asked to inform the Clerk of any changes to their record of business interests.	All
		Annual declaration	Trustees completed the annual declaration form circulated at the meeting.	
		Companies House ID verification	Trustees were reminded on the new requirement to verify their identification at Companies House and to send their unique code to the Clerk.	All
		Minutes of the	Minutes of the meeting held 9 th July 2025 were	

		last Trust Board Meeting	<p><u>approved</u> as a correct record of the meeting.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>Register of Business interests was updated</p> <p>Academy Trust handbook is an agenda item for this meeting</p> <p>The Clerk will circulate individual training reminders to Trustees</p> <p>RK will update on funding opportunities at the next meeting</p> <p>Link Trustee visits and record of visit forms are on the agenda for this meeting</p>	<p>NB</p> <p>RK</p>
		Scheme of Delegation	The Scheme of Delegation has been reviewed to ensure compliance and there are no material changes to note.	
		Terms of Reference	<p>Trustees confirmed the terms of reference for:</p> <p>Pay and Remuneration- GT</p> <p>Governance Oversight and Standards- CN</p> <p>Finance and Resources – SMC</p> <p>Audit and Risk – AG</p>	
		Membership	<p>MV, as CEO from September 2026, will be taking this opportunity to work closely with LM over the coming year to ensure a smooth transition.</p> <p>Capacity will be more available once the work with the RISE project ends in January. Primary school visits are scheduled as a useful way to build relationships, and to see priorities and issues.</p> <p>MV also plans to work with CFO and Trust Director of HR to learn more around Finance and HR. MV also plans to attend the Central Services team meetings, where possible, to gain more indepth experience of the whole organisation.</p> <p>MV has applied to complete a leadership course with University of Oxford to further upskill, and will be looking to take up any opportunities available. MV also confirmed that he had made some good connections with other CEOs and this would be useful contact for the future.</p> <p>Q – What do you expect to be your biggest challenge?</p> <p>A – I would see this as growth for the future, it will be a complex balance in a difficult financial time. How do we move forward with capacity for growth and be able to support schools but also maintain our standards. It</p>	

			<p>will be a whole team responsibility.</p> <p>AG suggested to MV to think about possibly having a coach or a mentor, who would be able to tailor their support directly to the individual. MV confirmed that this does come as part of the leadership course he has applied to.</p> <p>Trustees were pleased to note the plans in place for the coming year, and offered their support to MV for any issues/ideas he may wish to explore and seek their help or advice on.</p>	
		Link Trustee roles and responsibilities	<p>Trustees updated on their link roles:</p> <p>Maths – A Gilmour – has a visit scheduled following this meeting</p> <p>English – C Nevin – is waiting on confirmation of a visit date from the Trust Director</p> <p>MFL – S McGill – there is no update for this meeting</p> <p>Humanities – D Kershaw – there is no update for this meeting</p> <p>CC&R – T Little – in the process of arranging a link visit</p> <p>PE – N Thompson – updated on exiting Academic Football Pathway at Laurus Ryecroft</p> <p>Safeguarding – T Little – regularly meets with D Brown to review safeguarding across the Trust</p> <p>SEND – G Turnpenney – visits have been arranged and have included access arrangements focus. DfE for SEND students was discussed and the ways in which the opportunity can be made accessible to all. GT will also be attending a SEND Trustee course facilitated by CST.</p> <p>PSHE – J Crawford – there is no update for this meeting and a visit will be arranged</p> <p>Primary – S Mellor – SM has met with JM and LW and visited CHPS. SM plans to attend all 6 primary schools to gain a comprehensive overview of the primary sector of the Trust. In four of the six schools the thematic goal is behaviour, the plan is how to approach and adapt.</p>	
		Policies for approval	<p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the following policies:</p> <p>BTec Policies and Procedures</p> <p>CPD Complaints Policy</p> <p>CPD Malpractice and Maladministration Policy</p> <p>NEA Policy</p> <p>Online Safety Policy</p> <p>Review of Marking Policy</p>	

		Laurus Institute Governance area	Trustees acknowledged the Code of Conduct and agreed to adhere to.	
2	Being strategic	Trust Vision, Strategy, Culture and Values	<p>The TDP was updated following the strategic Trust Board meeting in May 2025. The document is a live document which is updated ongoing.</p> <p>Q – Why is the date of the plan 2023-2025? A – We are happy to extend for a further year to 2026. This will be a consolidation year ready for the incoming CEO in September 2026.</p> <p>MV commented he was in the process of updating the TDP scorecard and that there was some data not yet published, which would be included.</p> <p>Trustees had no further questions.</p>	
		Trust Safeguarding	<p>D Brown updated Trustees on the changes to KCSiE for September 2025.</p> <p>The guidance has been updated to include mis information and potential conspiracy theories. There are also updates to reiterate alternative provision, to know exactly where the students are going, and that the responsibility for the students remains with the school.</p> <p>The Trust Safeguarding Strategy was circulated prior to the meeting. The document had been revised over the summer, with input from T Little, and the Safeguarding leads in all schools. It is a one-year document which will be reviewed annually.</p> <p>Safeguarding will be a standing item on this agenda, to allow Trustees the opportunities to ask any questions. Anonymised data will be presented to show trends or issues. In the secondary sector all schools use the same CPOMS code to allow for analysis.</p>	

		Exec Team updates	<p>LM updated Trustees that T Coulson, Director of Regions Group, had visited Laurus Ryecroft in the first week of term and had been very complimentary of the whole Trust and the student and pupil outcomes.</p> <p><u>Growth</u></p> <p>DfE had contacted the Trust regarding a school in Stockport LA. MV and LM had spoken to Director of Education for Stockport regarding this and were at this point in time still waiting to arrange a possible visit.</p> <p>LM updated on a local primary school, whose Governors had voted to join the Trust. The challenge would be the school is one form entry. LM updated Trustees on the possibilities of a group of primary schools getting together to join the Trust as a group would be a potential solution, which would help with economies of scale.</p> <p>Q What are the headcounts for the schools?</p> <p>A – There are falling rolls in the primary sector. We would obviously need to do initial due diligence but bringing a group of primary schools in together would make a significant difference. Trustees gave their <u>approval</u> to undertake initial due diligence on the schools and to report back at a future meeting.</p> <p>There has also been some interest from a potential school new build in the local area on a garden village housing development. This is only initial interest at this stage.</p> <p>There has also been some speculative interest from a couple of high schools in different LAs. It was agreed that growth opportunities should be considered individually.</p> <p>Q – Do we have a ratio of primary and secondary schools we would not wish to cross?</p> <p>A – No, it is more around the number of pupils, it could be a large secondary school or a small primary school.</p>	
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		Trust Board committee chair updates	<p><u>Governance Oversight and Standards</u></p> <p>C Nevin gave a verbal update to Trustees on the meeting which had taken place on 9th July.</p> <p>A representative of Governors for Schools joined the meeting virtually and outlined their role and services. The presentation included information about their current Pathways to Governance and their planned Pathway to Trusteeship.</p> <p>Trustees undertook a review of AC membership and noted that Norris Bank had a number of parent governors and that HGPS had recently lost its Co-Chairs.</p> <p>The committee reviewed and agreed the role descriptions for Staff Governor, Parent Governor, SEND Governor and Pupil Premium Governor.</p> <p>The Chairs of HGPS and Woodford attended. The Woodford AC was well served and effective with no current issues. HGPS was still developing and would need some support over the next few terms. It was felt that it might be helpful for a member of the GO&S Committee to join the AC and J Crawford kindly volunteered to take on this task.</p> <p>L Woolley agreed to draw up set of questions to assess the effectiveness of the Governor induction process.</p>	
		Link Trust updates and Records of Visits	Trustees were reminded to complete their record of visit proformas after each link visit, and to send to the Clerk for retention.	All
		Admissions policies 2027/2028	<p>Trustees reviewed all Admissions policies for 2027/2028.</p> <p>There are 2 policies which must go to consultation due to the 7-year rule, for Cheadle Hulme Primary School and Laurus Cheadle Hulme.</p> <p>Trustees <u>approved</u> the 2 policies to go to consultation. Trustees <u>approved</u> all other Admissions policies for publication.</p>	

3	Educational performance and staff performance management	Production and analysis of educational data	<p>Trustees reviewed the outcomes for all schools in the Trust.</p> <p><u>Primary</u> EYFS GLD were reviewed, including for Norris Bank Primary School who had joined the Trust in September.</p> <p>Crown Street was the first year of opening and work is being done to understand the demographic in the city centre.</p> <p>The results at HGPS were discussed at length. A new phonics programme is being implemented, but this will take time to embed. Work is being done to ensure the structures, people and processes are fully in place.</p> <p>Year 4 multiplication tables check outcomes were reviewed. The pupils undertake an online test of 25 questions, which they have 6 seconds to answer. Trustees were pleased to note the high average scores for a number of the schools in the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees then reviewed the KS2 outcomes, noting that this was the first set of outcomes for Cheadle Hulme Primary School. HGPS results were lower than the previous year, and also than national average.</p> <p>Q – What is the expected standard? A – 100 is the score.</p> <p>LW confirmed to Trustees that she was liaising with all Heads of School, and that there were strategic plans in place and areas for improvement had been identified.</p> <p><u>Secondary</u> Trustees were pleased to review the Year 9 MFL results for all schools, with the exception of Priestnall where the first set of year 9 results will be in 2026. Trustees were pleased to note that 18% of students at DHS had achieved a grade 9.</p> <p>Q – What is a grade 7? A – It is equivalent of an A or above. A grade 4 is a pass, and a grade 5 is a strong pass.</p> <p>Trustees were reminded that there would be no Progress 8 scores for this cohort as there was no KS2 attainment due to the pandemic.</p> <p>Trustees were pleased to review the KS4 outcomes for all schools for 9-5 including English and Maths. CHHS</p>	
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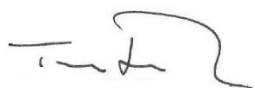
		<p>had achieved the best ever results of 75%, and that 42% of all grades were the equivalent of an A or above.</p> <p>Q – How do the Heads of School respond to the figures comparison?</p> <p>A – There is a good competitive element, and they are all motivated and inspired to achieve.</p> <p>Trustees were informed that there are always contextual factors to consider when reviewing the outcomes. For example, CHHS has 12% FSM whilst DHS is 38% FSM.</p> <p>Q – Is the trend positive, and there is improvement year on year?</p> <p>A – It is difficult to compare as it is based on context, and is cohort specific.</p> <p><u>Sixth Form</u></p> <p>Trustees reviewed the year 12 results for Further Maths and Core Maths.</p> <p>Trustees were delighted to review the KS5 outcomes, whilst noting it was the first set of results for Hazel Grove, Laurus Ryecroft and Didsbury.</p> <p>Year 13 destinations were presented to Trustees. Oxbridge entries are an area of focus in the coming year.</p> <p>Q- Do you have the geographic destinations of where the students apply to?</p> <p>A – We had smaller numbers going to Bath and Bristol, but large numbers moving on to Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester.</p> <p>Trustees thanked DW for the presentation and were pleased to note the outcomes for all schools.</p> <p>Trustees had no further questions.</p>	
	New Ofsted Framework	<p>Ofsted have recently published the revised framework for inspection. A pilot inspection was recently done at Cheadle Hulme High School and it was noted that there were no longer judgements, only grades. Trustees reviewed the new grade categories.</p> <p>Trustees were informed that the revised framework would be the focus for the Governor and Trustee Conference in December.</p>	

		Trust approach to policies for curriculum and assessment	M Vevers and L Woolley confirmed to Trustees that the policies for curriculum and assessment are in line with the Trust approach and statutory requirements.	
		Approach to staff appointment, dismissal, appraisal and performance management	L Magrath confirmed that the approach to staff appointment, dismissal, appraisal and performance management is in line with statutory requirements.	
4	Financial performance	Changes to the Academy Trust Handbook	<p>W Mason presented to Trustees the key updates to the Academy Trust Handbook. The handbook is the overarching framework for financial governance and controls.</p> <p>Trustees noted that executive pay was a focus and that this would be reviewed at the Pay and Remuneration committee meeting.</p> <p>Trustees also reviewed the Digital and Technology standards in schools document, which the Trust are working towards meeting by 2030. Trustees were pleased to note that a significant number of the recommendations were already in place.</p>	
		Finance update	<p>Trustees were informed the external audit would commence in the week following this meeting. Trustees noted there were late changes to the budget outturn, including grant funding received, catering contract return income, and LA SEND income which had been received later than expected. There were also some variations for unpaid LOA and pension opt-outs. Trustees were informed that the Trust do not give pensions advice, and that it is a totally personal decision to the individual, but that sign posting to advice is given to staff.</p> <p>Thanks were offered to W Mason for the financial update and the work done ongoing.</p>	
		Review financial skill set on the Trust Board	<p>Trustees felt that there was good financial expertise on the Trust Board, but that this is something which should always be considered when appointing new Trustees.</p> <p>WM commented that there was a good skill set of Trustees on both the Finance & Resources and Audit & Risk committees, who provide both challenge and support.</p>	

5	AOB		Governor and Trustee Conference will be held on Wednesday 10 th December 2025 from 9.00 – 10.30am.	
		Approvals at this meeting:	<p>Trustees made the following approvals at this meeting:</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held 9th July 2025.</p> <p>Terms of Reference for all four Trust Board committees.</p> <p>6 policies – Btec policies and procedures, CPD Complaints policy, CPD Malpractice and Maladministration policy, NEA policy, Online Safety policy and Review of Marking policy.</p> <p>Initial due diligence on a school which has expressed an interest in joining the Trust.</p> <p>Cheadle Hulme Primary School and Laurus Cheadle Hulme Admissions policies for 2027/2028 for consultation.</p> <p>14 Admissions policies for 2027/2028.</p>	
6	Meeting dates	Meeting dates	<p>Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 10.30am</p> <p>Wednesday 11th February 2026 at 10.00am</p> <p>Wednesday 6th May 2026 at 10.00am</p> <p>Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 10.00am</p>	

Impact of Meeting / Key Outcomes	
Trustees approved the terms of reference for the four Trust Board committees	
MV updated Trustees on his plans for the year, prior to taking up the post of CEO from September 2026	
Trustees updated on their link visits to schools	
Trustees approved 6 policies	
Members of the Executive Team updated on growth opportunities	
D Brown presented KCSIE updates and the Trust Safeguarding Strategy	
Chair of GO&S committee gave a verbal update of the July meeting	
Trustees approved 14 admissions policies, and 2 policies for consultation	
Trustees received a presentation on educational outcomes for all schools in the Trust	
CFO presented the changes to the Academy Trust Handbook	

Meeting closed at 12.05pm



T Little
Chair of Trust Board
11.12.2025

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