



St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Trust Board Minutes of Thursday 8 December 2022 at 5:00pm

Chair: Sarah Noon	
Clerk: Joanne Williams	
Location: Str Katherine’s House/ Teams	
FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.	
Governors Attending:	Margaret Hyde, Christopher Maher, Jennifer Lawes, Sarah Noon, Paul Medcalf, Nick O'Brien, Martin O'Dowd, Clare McKenzie, Richard Walsh, Helena Carrazedo, Keith Wharam,
Governors Apologies:	
Non Governors Attending:	Joanne Williams, Mary Robson, Simon Redfern, Duncan Whitehouse, Peter Giorgio, Kevin Gritton,
Non Governors Apologies:	Simon Gillespie.
Agenda Item 1	▶ Welcome, apologies and opening prayer
MINUTE	1. The meeting opened at 5pm led in prayer by SN. 2. Apologies were received and accepted from Fr. Simon.
Agenda Item 2	▶ Notification of conflicts, business and pecuniary interests
MINUTE	2. There were no declarations of interest.
Agenda Item 3	▶ Note minutes of previous meetings
MINUTE	1. Minutes of previous meetings were all noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 July 2022 • 25 July 2022 • 8 September 2022



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 October 2022
Agenda Item 4	▶ Notification of resignations and appointments to the Trust Board
MINUTE	1. It was noted that Charles Archer resigned on 6 October 2022 due to work commitments. Companies House has been informed and the Trust website has been updated
Agenda Item 5	▶ Key Diocesan notifications
MINUTE	<p>1. Environmental statement from Rt. Rev Patrick McKinney</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bishop Patrick has issued an environmental statement in acknowledgement of the work of the 3 CMATs, Diocesan Trustees, Youth Service and Education Service. All are individual legal entities bringing everyone together under one framework and statement. <p>2. Memorandum of Understanding for HR, Payroll and Pensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Memorandum is for Director's information and has been updated to reflect 3 CMATs instead of 4. The Memorandum defines how Trusts work with HR and Pensions. The addition is that there is one HR Director, Mary Robson, who works across all 3 Trusts. <p>3. Occupation of Academy premises by Catholic Multi Academy Trusts (CMATs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board agreed to adopt the framework reflecting the change from 4 to 3 CMATs. It was noted that whilst the estate is maintained the investment needs of the Trust estate is high, comparable with the national picture of the need for investment in the school estate. The estate is compliant with health and safety requirements and all compliance issues are managed.
ACTION	<p>1. PG to ensure summary of changes are included in the Memorandum of Understanding going forwards.</p> <p>2. SN and MO'D to discuss management information on payroll in relation to the Memorandum of Understanding.</p> <p>3. PG to amend the Memorandum of Understanding to include a value for money review in April.</p>
DECISION	1. The Memorandum of Understanding was formally adopted.
CHALLENGE	<p>1. There is no monthly Management Information on payroll within the Memorandum of Understanding.</p> <p>2. Are we due a value for money review in April 2023?</p>



	<p>3. Are we compliant with the Occupation of Academy premises framework? 3. How does what happens in CMAT's filter to Diocesan Trustees?</p>
<p>Agenda Item 6</p>	<p>▶ Trust Board Committees - key matters to raise with the Board</p>
<p>MINUTE</p>	<p>1. Curriculum and Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulations were extended to St. Charles and St. Joseph's schools following Ofsted inspections. • The Curriculum and Standards committee have reviewed a RAG-rated overview of schools and only 2 schools are currently red due to falling numbers, SEND and staff mobility. These points will be tracked going forward. • Themes are being tracked and Headteachers are being asked how they are being addressed. • The Board would like reassurance regarding Headteacher mobility. • Directors are monitoring RAG-rated overview of schools particularly red schools. <p>2. HR, Staffing, Pay and Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment into the HR team remains challenging. • SR will consider all vacancies for affordability to make appointments to vacancies, will never allow a Health and Safety issue to arise and will maintain a fully staffed premises team. • The Trust has a high level of supply teachers to ensure we are at least at required levels. Short-term supply rates are higher since COVID, and this is where the higher costs are coming from. Safety and education provision are a priority and children will not go without an education. • There are currently 28 vacancies which is lower than previously. The majority of for support staff, Teaching Assistants and particularly SEND Teaching Assistants. • The turnover of teaching staff is 3 times higher than previously, therefore creative thinking is required. This isn't however out of kilter with the sector as a whole. <p>3. Catholic Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee received an overview of the Chaplaincy team. • CSI framework was reviewed.



- The Headteachers report has been re-worded to collect further information on Catholic Life.
- Deanery level discussions are ongoing regarding the capacity of Priests.
- It was noted that a couple of Trust schools are Order-based inc. St. Joseph's, Matlock.
- There is a lot of emphasis on working with Parish Priests but little acknowledgement of Religious Orders and the creation of Catholic Life in schools in our Trust.

4. Audit, Risk and Governance

- An external review of safeguarding is to be commissioned.
- An additional meeting is scheduled for next week to review statutory annual reporting which needs to be agreed and submitted by 31 December 2022.
- The risk register is still evolving and will be reviewed and monitored at each committee and fully overviewed by the Audit, Risk and Governance committee.

5. Finance and Estates

- The budget has been reviewed, and there is a need to ensure cash-flow is robustly managed.
- There is a need to review expenditure on a school-by-school basis and to work with the ESFA to understand the short- and long-term cash position and what can be done to improve this position.
- Estates - There is over 100 separate projects currently being prioritised.
- A separate meeting will be held in January regarding RAG-rating to prioritise actions.
- SR received an update on ESFA guidance this week.
- Additional capital funding has been announced this week to target energy efficiency, however we are already funding this from revenue reserves, therefore this does provide a relief.
- Financial statements are to be submitted by 31 December 2022.
- SR continues to work on a recovery plan.
- KG, PG and SN met with ESFA this week regarding financial position. The ESFA were complimentary about the work of SR and were very reassured.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A School Resource Management Advisor (SRMA) will work with the CMAT to identify additional savings, and this is likely to be a Finance Director from another Trust. Discussions are ongoing between CEO's and CFOs to identify realistic solutions where possible. • A 2-stage focus was agreed; an initial plan to be submitted to ESFA as soon as possible to evidence the Trust is approaching it properly and in January 2023 an SRMA will review budgeting for the longer-term. • Discussions are ongoing regarding last year's financial swing regarding what was projected, against what actually happened. • The Trust is looking at cash-flow and will be looking at borrowing money from the ESFA. Stringent and difficult decisions will need to be made to build up reserves. • If additional funding is sought from the ESFA, it may come with a notice to improve. <p>6. Local Governing Boards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been a number of meetings with Governors and Chairs regarding working relationships. Pilot work will begin with some LGB's in the Lent term • LGB's are looking forward to meeting Directors and welcoming them into the life of the school, however Directors will not be attending local governing board meetings. • It was noted that schools know Directors may be making contact and requesting feedback from LGB's
ACTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. KG and SR agreed to provide a timetable to share each step of the plan. 2. SR has a meeting with ESFA next week and will find out exactly what we need to provide.
CHALLENGE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As the Trust is facing financial difficulties, are we able to staff our schools to required health and safety levels, has the committee addressed this? 2. Do we have a number of vacancies? They are generally for reserved posts and premises officers and are often difficult to fill. 3. Can we provide an action plan before Christmas 4. Will SR be looking at the budget from an academy perspective and central team view? 5. One of the big issues is catering and utility cost increase, are the other 2 Trusts seeing the same decline? 6. The ESFA requires assurance that the Trust can defer this situation until April 2023, with a view to the longer-term too at individual school cost level.



<p>Agenda Item 7</p>	<p>▶ Chief Executive update</p>
<p>MINUTE</p>	<p>KG provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New meeting structures with the executive team and central teams are in place to promote the culture of working together. • The Trust is a facilitator for school improvement. • The executive team is working with the central team and giving sufficient time to work in schools. • The mission, vision and virtues came across well on Feast day. • The Trust has now had 5 Ofsted inspections including. Outcomes have been very positive particularly relating to the impact the Trust has had on schools. The framework in place to support schools in readiness for inspection has been tremendous, however the delivery requires tweaking. The quality of LGB input into inspections was strong. • It was noted that KG's report can evolve and the Board can request additional information to be included as required.
<p>•</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 8</p>	<p>▶ HR notifications</p>
<p>MINUTE</p>	<p>1. MR provided the following update covering Advent 1 and 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employment checks on online activity is a new initiative following KCSIE 2022. The Board has considered undertaking checks for short-listed applicants, and it has been decided to do checks on selected candidates as part of a conditional offer from a GDPR perspective. This was unanimously approved by the Board. It was noted that in most Ofsted inspections this was not raised and during one inspection, inspectors were happy with the approach. • Redundancy/restructuring, capability and low-level concerns can be considered by the curriculum committee whilst MR has put areas of sensitivity to unions. Further discussions can be considered by the HR committee. • Reserved positions guidance follows NRCDES guidance regarding what to bear in mind for clarification purposes only. <p>2. The following policies were unanimously agreed and adopted subject to changes to reflect 3 not 4 CMAT's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy and Restructuring



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability • Appeals <p>3. Managers guidance for strike action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance has been shared with HR committees. • Two big unions have ballots closing in January 2023 and it is believed they will get the vote to take industrial action, therefore it is suggested that guidance be shared with Headteachers to ensure questions and answers can be considered. Frequently asked questions can be collated and added to the guidance. • Contingency planning is in place for this scenario. • It was confirmed that should anyone be asked for comment they should make contact with DW who will refer them to communications manager Nicola Allen.
CHALLENGE	<p>1. It appears that policies are not being review by policy-setters as there is frequent reference to 4 CMATS. It was noted that this relates to timing issues as policies were initially presented when there were still 4 CMATs, however once they have been approved they will be amended to reflect 3 Trusts.</p> <p>2. Why do we tie policy (board-related) and procedure (operational) into one document, i.e redundancy and restructuring?</p>
Agenda Item 9	<p>▶ Legal and Regulatory</p>
MINUTE	<p>1. Questions were invited on the Governance Manager report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional point was made by way of an update - the catering contract consultation concluded with no issues raised.
CHALLENGE	<p>1. Will the financial implications of the support staff pay award be funded by the government or the Trust? There is no government funding available for support staff or Teacher pay awards, however it has been built into the cash-flow.</p> <p>2. Is there an update on the telephony tender? Joe Redmond is leading this tender and now has 3 quotes. The preferred tender will be for approval by SR.</p>
Agenda Item 10	<p>▶ SRS CMAT Admissions policy</p>
MINUTE	<p>1. A changes document was provided for review, however in terms of process there is not a requirement to consult this year for admission 2024-25 as approval has already been sought.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary and Secondary Admissions policies have unanimous approval.
Agenda Item 11	▶ Policies
MINUTE	<p>1. Relationship and Sex Education policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy is in line with the Diocesan policy for RSE. • It was noted that the policy is delayed as it should have been in place by September 2021, however there is still some consultation ongoing at school level. • 10:10 resource is used by most schools for the delivery of RSE.
ACTION	<p>1. DW to review the numbering of the RSE policy 2. DW to clarify point 17.2 to refer to Trust Board and not LGB committee 3. The RSE policy is to be formatted and shared with schools for consultation</p>
CHALLENGE	<p>1. The RSE policy is in draft form and refers to 4 CMATs. 2. Who is the RSE co-ordinator point 19.1 refers to? The co-ordinator is designated in each school</p>
Agenda Item 12	▶ Other matters
MINUTE	<p>1. PG wished to offer thanks from Bishop Patrick and himself to KG and the whole central team during a term of many challenges, for the magnificent way everyone has adapted and reviewed what is happening in the Trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that KG's feast day address was perfect in terms of content and thanks also to Sister Judith Russi. • The Trust has Bishop Patrick's full support. <p>6.35pm - PG left the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KG thanked the central team for their support for what was a whole-team effort. • Specific thanks were extended to DW and Nicola Allen for their organisation. <p>6.40pm - KG, MR, SR and DW left the meeting</p> <p>2. Directors only matters</p>

Public View Minutes



**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>"The Trust Board have unanimously agreed that the item which this Minute replaces is deemed to be "Private and Confidential"</i>
Agenda Item 13	▶ Closing prayer
MINUTE	1. The meeting closed at 7.05pm led in prayer by SN.