

**St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Trust Board Minutes of Thursday 9 February 2023 at 5:00pm**

Chair: Sarah Noon	
Clerk: Joanne Williams	
Location: St Katherine’s House/ MS Teams	
FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.	
Governors Attending:	Sarah Noon, Christopher Maher, Clare McKenzie, Martin O'Dowd, Richard Walsh, Margaret Hyde, Paul Medcalf, Helena Carrazedo, Keith Wharam,
Governors Apologies:	Nick O'Brien, Jennifer Lawes,
Non-Governors Attending:	Joanne Williams, Simon Redfern, Duncan Whitehouse, Mary Robson, Kevin Gritton,
Non-Governors Apologies:	Simon Gillespie, Peter Giorgio.
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 NO, JL, SG and PG.
Agenda Item 2	▶ Notification of Conflicts, Business and Pecuniary Interests
MINUTE	1. There were no conflicts or interests declared.
Agenda Item 3	▶ Review and approve minutes of previous meeting - 8 December 2022
MINUTE	1. Minutes of the previous meeting on 8 December 2022 were confirmed for accuracy.
Agenda Item 4	▶ Matters arising from previous minutes



MINUTE	<p>1. All matters were considered complete or for further consideration at this meeting with the exception of the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 5, Action 2 - SN and MO'D have discussed management information on payroll in relation to the Memorandum of Understanding.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Agenda Item 5	<p>▶ Correspondence</p>
MINUTE	<p>1. A letter has been received from PG asking Directors to release members of CSI trained staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The terms of the release remain unchanged, and payment remains the same as for previous DCI's therefore nothing has changed and the request is only for the release of staff. Expenses for CSI's are nationally agreed and are included in the fee. It was noted that Trusts will profit from the release of staff for this purpose. SN has signed and returned the agreement; however the Diocese requires a resolution from the Board.
ACTION	<p>1. DW to confirm the resolution agreeing to staff supporting Catholic School Inspections on the terms agreed above.</p>
DECISION	<p>1. The SRS Trust Board endorse the release of staff to undertake Catholic School Inspections. This is on the basis of the assurances the Inspection Framework provides to continuous improvement of Catholic education across Catholic schools nationally and the benefits of professional development it provides to the staff trained to be inspectors.</p>
CHALLENGE	<p>1. Are trained staff happy to support Catholic School Inspections?</p> <p>2. We have only 6 inspectors, is there a plan for more as only one is a secondary inspector?</p> <p>3. Do we replace staff who are being taken out of schools for CSI's? Supply costs are covered by incoming fees, therefore impact will be limited.</p> <p>4. Is there a possibility of having other Trust inspectors to inspect our schools?</p>
Agenda Item 6	<p>▶ Trust Board committee - key matters to raise with the Board</p>



MINUTE

1. Curriculum and Standards - CM

- The current SIP model has been considered in line with back-filling leadership capacity as Headteachers continue to work as inspectors.
- 12 school Ofsted inspections have been completed to date across the trust, and it was noted that staff have worked hard in preparation.
- There will be a focus on SEND at the next committee meeting.
- KM has presented the new safeguarding report.
- The committee have requested a review of RAG rating and how schools are progressing to next steps.
- A joint curriculum and standards meeting is being held with the HR, Staffing, Pay and Performance Committee to consider the SIP model going forward as it currently appears to work for primary schools, however there are gaps in secondary schools.
- The committee thanked the senior leadership team for all the support provided for Ofsted inspections.
- There is a spike in the number of vacancies for a September start.
- The Diocese has launched a 'Calling all Catholic Teachers' programme to recruit teachers to our schools.
- Strikes are causing a national issue with staffing.
- It was noted that the Government has a recruitment platform using LinkedIn.

2. Catholic Life - RW

- Consideration has been given to interaction with parishes and Priests as the Bishop has asked how schools interact with parishes.

3. Finance and Estates (split into separate meetings) - PM

Finance

- The financial position is improving but a deficit is still predicted.
- Recruitment requests are being sense-checked.
- Additional income and cost reduction opportunities are being considered including the cost-effectiveness of individual schools.
- The first invoice has been received from Derbyshire catering and consideration has been given to the gap between what parents and carers are charged and the cost per meal.



- SR has met with the SRMA assigned to the Trust who will complete a full financial review of the Trust over 5-weeks which will hopefully support the request for ESFA funding and action planning. He is complimentary of the systems the Trust has in place.
- The ESFA continues to be supportive.
- Work is ongoing with Headteachers to include them in the ongoing process.
- A good service and information is being provided by Derbyshire catering regarding the number of children taking meals. The model is good, they are very responsive and considered to be a good partner.
- The cash-flow graph should help us to improve and increase income.

Estates

- 3 Trust schools have been successful on the school re-building programme.

5.50pm - CMc arrived

- Directors are impressed at the level of detail AM and his team has regarding school conditions and prioritisation, therefore there is confidence in estates management.
- Key projects have been mapped against funding.
- There are many boilers included in the conditions report, and consideration has been given to greener options when possible.

5.50pm - SR left the meeting

- There is matched-funding available from the government which the Trust could access.

IT

- JR presented a plan regarding cyber-security, and an icloud-based telephone system.

5.52pm - SR returned

4. HR, Staffing, Pay and Performance - KW

- Teachers strike was discussed and 50% of our schools will be affected. Exemption was sought for years 10 to 13 as exam years have already been affected by Covid, however this was unsuccessful.

- A new HR/payroll system is in place and the committee has requested basic information relating to recruitment, training & development, disputes & disciplinaries and absence.
- A full list of what the new system can provide will be shared at the next committee meeting.
- The Leave of Absence policy has been reviewed for paid/unpaid leave. The policy will next be considered at a meeting of Trust Chairs for review.

5. LGBs - DW

- A symposium meeting was held in January 2023
- A new format Headteacher report has been provided to LGBs. There has been a mixed response to the level of information provided, however it has generally been well received.
- The LGB section on the Trust Board agenda will now be more formalised and will pull information including Catholic life from LGB reports.
- SR has made Headteachers aware of the Trust's financial position and Headteacher's are encouraged to share school level financial data with their governors.
- DW will add finances and what is available to the next symposium on 7 March 2023. SR will join the symposium and present to governors. There is a need for transparency at all levels and to support Headteachers regarding LGB enquiries, however there is a clear understanding of the need to be careful how this message is managed and delivered.

6. Audit, Risk and Governance

- The committee does not meet until 2 May 2023
- SR has met with internal auditors today with cyber security being a priority.

ACTION	1. Directors to utilise their Link Director visits to schools to gain understanding of the Trust's impact at a local level.
CHALLENGE	<p>1. with the cost of supply teachers and the variance in quality, what is the situation regarding staffing?</p> <p>2. We have contracted out cleaning and catering services with SLA's, but how do we monitor provision i.e. how do we check children are getting a good square meal?</p>



	<p>3. Will the Board receive a report from the SRMA?</p> <p>4. What happens in May when the cashflow ends?</p> <p>5. How is communication with schools and what has been the response regarding financial position?</p> <p>6. Are we receiving support regarding curriculum planning?</p> <p>7. How aware are Headteachers about the SRMA?</p> <p>9. What is the process for approving the SRMA plan? An extra-ordinary meeting will be scheduled. Our request to the ESFA will need to be approved by the full Trust Board, however the Finance committee may review it thoroughly initially.</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7</p>	<p>▶ Chief Executive update</p>
<p>MINUTE</p>	<p>1. KG provided the following update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 secondary schools across the Diocese / 3 schools from St. Ralph Sherwin Trust (Saint Benedict’s, St Philip Howard and St. John Houghton) have been selected out of 239 schools nationally to benefit from the school re-build programme. Thanks were extended to AM for the additional reports he requested to make the submissions. It was acknowledged that KG did a lot of work over the years to get to this stage with works at Saint Benedict's. • Ofsted inspections - of the 12 Trust school inspections to date, most have improved or stayed the same. School improvement plans and structural plans are in place for those schools where areas for improvement have been identified. • Team around the School themes - Strategies around how we individually and collectively communicate with Headteachers were reviewed. 18 schools have reported cleaning is improving, whilst 7 schools have reported cleaning as remaining the same or declining. This information is being taken back to Headteachers for transparency. • The Feast Day model involving parents and children and focusing on saving money was positively received. Allowing children and parents to be involved helped their understanding of the Trust virtues.
<p>Agenda Item 8</p>	<p>▶ Legal and Regulatory items</p>



<p>MINUTE</p>	<p>1. DW provided the following overview</p> <p>Policy Framework update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 79 policies in the framework which are RAG-rated based on progress. • DW has met with other Governance leads and has adapted approach in line with policy agenda. • DW is working to split policies and procedures. • The Board debated the difference between policy and procedure and the level at which both are agreed. • It was re-confirmed that changes to policy/procedure will be highlighted upon review. <p>Governance report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report outlines recent decisions made by the Board and complaints by process stage. • There has been a call for the complaints process to be reviewed which John Walker and PG are working on with groups of people to find a way to improve the experience for everyone at all stages of the process - complainant, investigator, panels. <p>Sixth Form Admissions policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy presented to the Board is a new cross Trust policy. • The policy was considered and unanimously agreed and adopted
<p>ACTION</p>	<p>1. DW to continue to review the Policy Framework and present an update at the next Audit, Risk and Governance Committee meeting.</p> <p>2. DW to review the template for polices to ensure they are concise with procedural guidance separated out into appendices or separate guidance documents.</p> <p>3. Routine approvals of policy to be reviewed by the relevant committee in the first instance and then recommended to the Trust Board.</p>
<p>CHALLENGE</p>	<p>1. Some policies do not have a renewal date on them?</p> <p>2. Some policies seem to be reviewed continually rather than at a set-point or a 2-yearly cycle for example?</p> <p>3. What dictates if something is a policy or procedure?</p> <p>4. Appendix 1 of the Governance report suggests parent parking outside school is likely to get worse.</p>



Agenda Item 9	▶ Constitutional matters
MINUTE	<p>1. Items for future agendas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum & Standards - a recruitment model review to be considered jointly with the HR, Staffing, Pay & Performance committee on 7 March 2023 at 6pm if possible. • Finance & Estates - 7 March 2023 change of time to 4pm <p>2. Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 23 March 2023, 5pm • Focus on Trust-wide SEF • Additional meetings will be scheduled as required <p>7.05pm - DW and SR left the meeting</p>
ACTION	1. DW to look to a date for a Board development session with CLT prior to the end of the academic year.
Agenda Item 10	▶ Confidential item - Recruitment and retention decision
MINUTE	<i>"The Trust Board have unanimously agreed that the item which this Minute replaces is deemed to be "Private and Confidential"</i>
Agenda Item 11	▶ Directors only items
MINUTE	1. There were no items for consideration
Agenda Item 12	▶ Closing prayer
MINUTE	1. The meeting closed at 7.35pm led in prayer by Deacon Richard