



Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust

Held on Thursday October 17th 2019 at 6.45pm
at St John's Primary School, Buckhurst Hill

MINUTES of the TRUSTEES MEETING

<u>Trustees</u>	
*	Lee Batson (Chair)
*	Lesley Duffin
*	Brenda Jarvis
*	Sue Sunderland (Vice Chair)
*	Dee Wood
*	James Wood
*	Peter Tidmarsh (CEO)
<u>Observers/Advisers</u>	
*	Elisabeth Nunn (Clerk)

* indicates attendance

(The meeting started at 6.47pm.)

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	Apologies (and reasons for absence); declarations of interest in agenda; plus declaration of Business Interests/Gifts and Hospitality There were no apologies for absence or declarations. All Trustees had completed their business interests forms. The Clerk will update the register of business interests and place this on the Trust website.	Clerk to place register of business interests on Trust website
2	To appoint the Chair and Vice Chair for 2019/2020 a) <u>Chair</u> : There had been one self-nomination for the role of Chair from Rev Batson. He left the room while Trustees discussed his reappointment and voted unanimously to appoint Rev Batson as Chair for 2019/2020. Rev Batson returned to the meeting and was informed of the Board's decision. b) <u>Vice Chair</u> : Rev Batson took the Chair and reported there had been one self-nomination for Vice Chair from Mrs Sunderland. She left the room while Trustees discussed her reappointment and voted unanimously to appoint Mrs Sunderland as Vice Chair for 2019/2020. Mrs Sunderland returned to the meeting and was informed of the Board's decision.	
3	AOB requests for an end-of-meeting consideration a) CEO's pay (to be discussed under agenda item 6).	



		ACTION
	b) Complaints which will be discussed under Clerk's Items.	
	(Miss Wood arrived at this point, 6.50pm.)	
4	<p>To review committee structure and agree membership</p> <p>a) Trustees approved the existing committee membership for the HR Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee (as detailed within the respective Terms of Reference for 2019/2020).</p> <p>b) <u>To note the progress of forming a new Curriculum/Data Committee</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that the Trust will begin to look into the setting up of a Curriculum/Data Committee which will meet once a term. He added that a working group is to meet to produce Terms of Reference for the new committee. The working group will also decide whether the committee is to focus mainly on data and/or the curriculum. Mr Tidmarsh, Mrs Sunderland and Mrs Duffin will represent the Trust Board on the working group and will join members of the data hub; Mr Tidmarsh will arrange a meeting before the end of the autumn term.</p> <p>c) Trustees were delighted to appoint Mrs Duffin as Safeguarding Governor for 2019/2020. It was noted that the CEO and Mrs Duffin are meeting Jo Barclay on November 19th 2019.</p> <p>d) Rev Batson was named specifically as the point of contact within the Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p>e) <u>To appoint a Trust representative to lead on Health and Safety within the MAT</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that John Rensink, from the Daniel Connal Partnership, will be providing health and safety support to the Trust.</p>	CEO to arrange a date for the data/curriculum working group
5	<p>To approve the Minutes of 3rd July 2019</p> <p>Trustees approved the Minutes of the meeting on 3rd July 2019 and these were signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Matters Arising (those which do not appear elsewhere on the agenda)</p> <p>a) <u>Agenda item 7a</u>: It was noted that the discussion on the NJC Support Staff Pay Scales 2020/2021 will be held in the second half of the autumn term.</p>	Agenda item December
6	<p>To note receipt of the Minutes from the two committees (October 2019)</p> <p>Trustees had received the Minutes from both committees.</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <p><u>Finance and Audit Committee</u></p> <p>Mr Wood, as Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, gave a brief verbal report on the Trust's finances. Trustees were pleased to note that the budget was healthy in terms of carry forward and in-year position. The following was also discussed:</p> <p>a) <u>To approve the teachers' annual pay award</u>: Trustees formally approved the 2.75% teachers' pay increase, across the board.</p> <p>b) <u>To discuss an external audit of the staffing/skillsets across school offices</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that the Trust Finance Manager has encountered varying levels of expertise and ability across the schools' finance staff and this was highlighted in the recent rag-rating exercise schools completed according to their</p>	



		ACTION
	<p>financial confidence. This exercise will be repeated in a year's time.</p> <p>c) Trustees agreed to appoint Haslers to carry out the Trust's annual internal scrutiny.</p> <p>d) After a discussion regarding the company's reliability, Trustees ratified the appointment of LGfl as the Trust's new broadband providers from April 2020. It was noted that Jonathan Furness will lead on this implementation and that the new system will be set up initially at St John's before it is rolled out across all schools.</p> <p>e) Trustees noted that progress on the ESFA audit had been discussed at the recent Finance and Audit Committee meeting.</p> <p><u>HR Committee</u></p> <p>a) <u>CEO performance review and pay</u>: A confidential discussion was held and appears on pink attached to these Minutes.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>To receive a briefing from the CEO</p> <p>a) <u>To review Trust assessment data for the summer term 2019</u>: The CEO reported that Mrs Grisley and Mr Woolard had produced a 2018/2019 data summary for Trustees. Mr Tidmarsh agreed to circulate the document after the meeting. Mr Tidmarsh highlighted the Alderton Junior School results; Trustees were delighted with the school's improved data. It was agreed that Rev Batson will write to the Headteacher, Mrs Johnson, on behalf of the Trustees to congratulate the school.</p> <p>Trustees reviewed the Trust's 'closing the gap' data for disadvantaged pupils compared to national figures. The following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>EYFS</u>: At 50%, the Trust figures were lower than national (57%). Mr Tidmarsh explained that some children were pre-verbal on entrance which affected the data. • <u>Phonics</u>: At 74%, the Trust was above national (71%). • <u>KS2 Combined</u>: At 49%, the Trust was below national (51%). Mr Tidmarsh reported that all the schools need to continue to work on this Trust focus. • <u>KS2 progress scores</u>: The CEO reported that most of the Trust schools' progress scores are below expected. However, he added that the figures were in the realms of acceptability in that they were not more than 3%. • Trustees discussed the schools with the lowest progress scores: Alderton Junior for Reading, Ivy Chimneys for Writing and Hillhouse for Maths. It was noted that Essex is to provide support to these schools in the relevant areas. • Trustees also noted the outstanding progress results across the board for Hereward Primary; it was agreed that Rev Batson will write to Mr Woolard on behalf of the Trustees. <p>b) <u>To note data relating to staff in terms of attendance, CPD, pathways and emotional wellbeing</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that he is collecting this data throughout the year and, going forward, will present it to Trustees each term. He added that some work has already been carried out by the Trust in terms of staff wellbeing and a number of schools are offering to be part of a pilot to gauge need. Rev Batson is part of a working group which has been set up, led by Mrs Hurwood from Epping Upland. It was noted that a wine-tasting event is planned for March.</p>	<p>CEO to circulate data summary</p> <p>Rev Batson to write to Alderton Jnr HT</p> <p>Rev Batson to write to Mr Woolard at Hereward</p> <p>CEO: termly agenda item</p>



	<u>ACTION</u>
<p>c) <u>An update on the production of a Trust press release</u>: The CEO reported that once Buckhurst Hill Primary converts to an academy and joins the Trust, he will produce a press release.</p> <p>d) Trustees noted the appointment of the Trust surveyors, the Daniel Connal Partnership.</p> <p>e) <u>Trust strategy</u>: The CEO to share LGBs' comments on the Trust strategy: This will be carried forward to the December meeting.</p> <p>f) Trustees approved the CEO's appointment as a Member of the Hoddesdon Schools Trust.</p> <p>g) <u>Central Staffing: To discuss and approve the posts of CFO and Trust Finance Manager following Mrs Freeman's resignation from December 31st 2019</u>: Trustees noted the Central Team staffing list, in particular the vacancies for a CFO and Finance Manager which had been discussed in great detail at both Trust committee meetings. The CEO explained that, following the Finance and Audit Committee meeting, he liaised with Haslers for their advice on the CFO/COO role and they confirmed that the vacancy fitted better with a CFO role. After further discussion, Trustees approved the vacancy for a Chief Financial Officer who must have a formal accountancy qualification.</p> <p>It was noted that the Trust will receive external financial support from Essex from November 4th and that this will also bridge the gap between Mrs Freeman leaving at the end of the autumn term and the new CFO starting.</p> <p>The CEO also reported that Haslers suggested the salary for the CFO should be between £60,000 and £65,000. Trustees approved this salary range. It was anticipated that the position will be advertised on Friday 18th October with interviews held in mid-November. On the panel will be Mrs Noden (Lambourne Headteacher), a representative from Haslers, the CEO and a Trustee from both of the Trust's committees. It was agreed that the Trust Finance Manager vacancy will be revisited once the CFO has been appointed.</p> <p>h) <u>Risk Register</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that he has updated the format of the Risk Register to make the headings more relevant to schools as well as the Trust. He has also added a section on fraud. The LGBs will complete the document in November and the Trust will review the consolidated document at its December meeting. Trustees asked: Q: Are we offering training to LGBs on how to complete the Risk Register? A: (CEO) It is just for LGBs to respond to a question on the Risk Register which is then flagged to us as Trustees. I am quietly confident this new version will be better. We could, however, potentially, look at moderation via the Governors Hub.</p> <p>i) <u>Trust Capacity Fund</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that the DfE has a Trust Capacity Fund of £17m which Trusts can apply for, bidding up to £300,000. One of the criteria is to take on a vulnerable school which the CEO reported was Buckhurst Hill Primary. Mr Tidmarsh is submitting a bid in early November; any funding received has to be spent by 31st March 2020. The CEO reported that he has focused the bid on the concept of building leadership capacity and developing</p>	<p>CEO to produce press release</p> <p>December agenda</p> <p>December agenda</p>



		<u>ACTION</u>
	<p>Deputy Headteachers. He will circulate the draft application form to Trustees for their comments.</p> <p>j) <u>Peer Review</u>: Mr Tidmarsh reported that central to school improvement is peer review. He added that three schools work together to review one another once a year with three targets: one for the school, one on data and one for the Trust. Trustees noted that Deputy Headteachers will be included in this peer review alongside Headteachers. The reviews will be discussed by the Data/Curriculum working group.</p> <p>k) <u>School Improvement Hubs</u>: Trustees noted the membership of the hubs for 2019/2020 and were pleased that this now included Deputy Headteachers and senior teachers.</p> <p>l) <u>Engagement</u>: Trustees were pleased to note that the Trust engages with all stakeholders and this is, in part, achieved by the regular updates. Mr Tidmarsh reported that he has still to meet with the midday staff.</p> <p>Trustees thanked Mr Tidmarsh for his update.</p>	<p>CEO to circulate draft capacity fund application for comments</p>
8	<p>An update on Trust membership Rev Batson reported on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>Matching Green Primary</u> is no longer an associate member of the Trust due to its location and distance from other member schools and also the size and capacity of the school. b) <u>Alderton Infant and Junior Schools</u> have been liaising about their future. Mr Tidmarsh reported that it is too early to report on how the schools are to collaborate, but initial discussions have been positive. There will be nothing formally agreed for at least a year. c) <u>Buckhurst Hill Primary</u> hopes to convert to an academy and join the Trust on November 1st. A confidential item was discussed and appears on pink attached to these Minutes. <p>Mr Tidmarsh reported that the school's LGB will be made up of 7 members, including three Trust Governors from the local community all of whom have an educational background. Two Parent Governors will be elected at the start of 2020. Trustees suggested that the school will need a Governor with a financial background.</p>	
9	<p>To receive an update on Financial Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Trustees noted that the LGBs' RAG-rating in terms of financial confidence was discussed at the Finance and Audit Committee meeting. b) Trustees noted that Haslers have been previously appointed as Auditors up until the period ending August 31st 2021. 	



		<u>ACTION</u>
10	<p>To review and approve the Scheme of Delegation Trustees reviewed and approved the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation. This will be placed on the Trust website and Google Space by the Clerk.</p>	Clerk to place SoD on website and Google Space
11	<p>Policies a) Trustees approved the following annual policies: Pay Policy: An amendment was made to the deadline for applications to or through the Upper Pay Range. It is now 30th September. Procurement Policy Gifts and Hospitality Policy Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy Business Continuity Plan: This is the Trust Policy; schools will have their own policy.</p> <p>b) Trustees noted the autumn term 2 policy review schedule for approval on 11th December 2019: Health and Safety Policy Governor Mentor/Buddy Policy Staff Probation Policy Risk Management Policy Flexible Working Policy Allegations Against Staff: Statement of Procedure.</p> <p>c) The annual Child Protection Policy had been approved by Trustees via email on October 3rd and circulated to schools.</p> <p>d) <u>How to manage breaches of the Code of Conduct Policy by Governors and Trustees</u>: This policy will be reviewed by the HR Committee at its November meeting and potentially added as an appendix to the Trust’s Complaints Policy.</p> <p>e) Trustees also approved the guidance relating to Chair’s Action which will be circulated to Clerks and LGBs by the Trust Clerk.</p>	HR agenda: November Clerk to circulate
12	<p>MAT Governance a) <u>To receive an update on Trustee recruitment</u>: Rev Batson reported that an application for the position of Trustee had been received, but then withdrawn. In order to boost the Board’s number, the Chair has applied to Academy Ambassadors. He has also communicated with the Diocese for potential applicants, but the Diocese does not have a pool of applicants. It was agreed that the CEO will place notification of the vacancies** in the weekly update. The Board stressed that one Member-appointed Trustee must have a strong financial background, possibly a qualified management accountant. It was agreed that the</p>	CEO to put vacancies in



		<u>ACTION</u>
<p>15</p>	<p>Clerk's Items</p> <p>a) Trustees approved the following documents for 2019/2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised LGB Terms of Reference. • The LGB's Terms of Reference for: Pay Committee Disciplinary/Dismissal Committee Discipline (Exclusions) Committee • The LGB Standing Orders. • The Board's Terms of Reference. • The LGBs' composition and membership. • The Terms of Reference for the two Committees: Finance and Audit Committee plus HR Committee. <p>b) <u>To receive and note the Clerk's report from the LGBs' recent meetings</u>: The Clerk's report had been circulated. Trustees noted Chigwell Row's discussions about buying land; Mr Tidmarsh reported that he is looking at ways forward for the school generally. Trustees also noted Oak View's comments about the Trust Inset day on October 25th and how it was not relevant to the school. Mr Tidmarsh reported that Oak View staff will not be attending.</p> <p>c) All Trustees signed their acknowledgement of KCSIE (part 1).</p> <p>d) <u>An update on Trustee training</u>: It was agreed that the Chair and the Clerk will liaise regarding Trustee training and report back at the next meeting.</p> <p>e) <u>An update on the provision of ID badges for Trustees</u>: Mr Tidmarsh and Rev Batson agreed to discuss the production of Trustees' photographs for the Trust website and ID badges and they will report back at the December meeting.</p> <p>f) <u>DBS</u>: It was noted that Member Mr Kennedy has completed the process for his DBS check.</p> <p>g) Miss Wood has completed her DBS paperwork and is awaiting confirmation.</p> <p>h) Trustees noted receipt of the new Academies Financial Handbook 2019 (attached).</p> <p>i) <u>Complaints</u>: A discussion was held about the Trust's Complaints Policy and who should sit on the LGB panel for stage 3. It was noted that one of the three panel members should be independent from the management of the school and could therefore be a Governor from another LGB within the Trust. Trustees noted that they will monitor any complaints on a regular basis.</p>	<p></p> <p>Chair/Clerk to discuss training</p> <p>CEO/Chair to discuss photographs</p>



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j) <u>GDPR</u> : All Trustees signed the annual GDPR consent form.																																																		
<p>16 Dates of meetings a) Trustees noted the dates of the meetings for 2019/2020:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3"><u>Autumn Term (2)</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Thursday 21st November 2019</td> <td>2.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Wednesday 27th November 2019</td> <td>7.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Wednesday 11th December 2019</td> <td>6.45pm</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="3"><u>Spring Term (1)</u></th> </tr> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Thursday 23rd January 2020</td> <td>2.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="3"><u>Spring Term (2)</u></th> </tr> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Wednesday 11th March 2020</td> <td>2.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Thursday 19th March 2020</td> <td>7.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Monday 30th March 2020</td> <td>6.45pm</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="3"><u>Summer Term (1)</u></th> </tr> <tr> <td>AGM</td> <td>Wednesday 22nd April 2020</td> <td>6.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="3"><u>Summer Term (2)</u></th> </tr> <tr> <td>HR Committee</td> <td>Tuesday 23rd June 2020</td> <td>2.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance and Audit Committee</td> <td>Wednesday 1st July 2020</td> <td>7.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust Board Meeting</td> <td>Thursday 9th July 2020</td> <td>6.45pm</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Autumn Term (2)</u>			HR Committee	Thursday 21 st November 2019	2.00pm	Finance and Audit Committee	Wednesday 27 th November 2019	7.00pm	Trust Board Meeting	Wednesday 11 th December 2019	6.45pm	<u>Spring Term (1)</u>			HR Committee	Thursday 23 rd January 2020	2.00pm	<u>Spring Term (2)</u>			HR Committee	Wednesday 11 th March 2020	2.00pm	Finance and Audit Committee	Thursday 19 th March 2020	7.00pm	Trust Board Meeting	Monday 30 th March 2020	6.45pm	<u>Summer Term (1)</u>			AGM	Wednesday 22 nd April 2020	6.00pm	<u>Summer Term (2)</u>			HR Committee	Tuesday 23 rd June 2020	2.00pm	Finance and Audit Committee	Wednesday 1 st July 2020	7.00pm	Trust Board Meeting	Thursday 9 th July 2020	6.45pm	
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