



Company Number: 07977368

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 6PM at Longcot and Fernham Community Primary School**

Present:

Anthony Cook (AC)- Chair  
 Liz Holmes - Vice Chair  
 Rev Jason St John Nicolle- (JN)  
 Sharon Farrell (SF)  
 Paul Turner- (PT)  
 Christine Price-Smith- (CPS)  
 Samantha Brady (SB)  
 Richard Evans (RE)- CEO

In attendance:

Anne Lynn (AL)- COO  
 Louise Warren (LW)- Director of Education  
 Rosie Phillips (RP) - Clerk

Apologies:

Malcolm Sperrin- (MS)  
 Adale Bennet (AB)

Standing Items		
1	Welcome, Apologies and Resignations	Action
	<p><b>Meeting opened at: 18:05</b>            LH opened the meeting and extended welcomes to the Board.</p> <p>Apologies were announced and accepted from MS and AB.            Apologies also accepted from MG, who joined via Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>Resignation was announced by LH.</p> <p>Resignation was announced by CPS, who informed the board that she resigns with great sadness and for multifaceted reasons. CPS confirmed that her resignation is with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023.</p> <p>LH extended thanks, on behalf of the board, to CPS for her long service, wise counsel and continued help and support during her time as a trustee.            AL informed the Board that they are seeking a replacement.</p>	
2	<p><b>Notice, Confidentiality and Quorum Requirements</b></p> <p>LH confirmed that the meeting was Quorate.            Confidentiality of the meeting was noted, with confidential minutes and a confidential agenda to abide by for specified topics.</p> <p>LH requested the Board announce any declarations, for which there were none recorded.</p>	
3	<p><b>Annual vote on appointment of FLT Chair from 5th Oct 2023-31 Sept 2024</b></p>	

	<p>AL informed the Board that, considering LH’s resignation as Chair, there had been one nomination for a new Chair, which was AC. AL asked AC would he like to say anything to the Board prior to stepping out to allow them to discuss and vote.</p> <p>AC extended thanks to LH and impressed upon the Board that he is committed to the success of the Trust and to the best outcomes for the students and the successful careers of all staff. AC stated that his commitment extended to building the best possible future for everyone within the Trust and to leading the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>AC vacated the room to allow the discussion and vote. By a show of hands, all voted in favour of AC becoming Chair.</p> <p>AC rejoined the Board and was elected Chair.</p>	
4	<p><b>Annual vote on appointment of a FLT Vice-Chair from 5th Oct 2023-31 Sept 2024</b></p> <p>AL informed the Board that AC had requested two vice-Chairs be appointed to support him in his role. She further informed the Board that there had been two nominations, LH and JN. AL asked LH and JN would they like to say anything to the Board prior to stepping out to allow them to discuss and vote.</p> <p>LH informed the Board that, in discussion with AC, it had been decided that it would be beneficial for the transition of the position of Chair if LH was Vice-Chair for a period, allowing a robust system of support and the seamless transfer of knowledge and skills.</p> <p>JN commented that he would be pleased to be given the opportunity to support AC and LH, noting that he feels strongly that robust governance delivers the best outcomes for children and that it is his aim to do what is necessary to ensure the delivery of robust governance for the Trust.</p> <p>LH and JN vacated the room to allow the discussion and vote. By a show of hands, all voted in favour of LH and JN becoming co-Vice-Chairs.</p> <p>LH and JN rejoined the Board and were elected as co-Vice-Chairs.</p> <p>AL introduced RP to the Board as their new clerk. A formal welcome was extended to RE, on behalf of the Board, by AC.</p>	
<b>Procedural Matters</b>		
5	<p><b>Accuracy of Minutes</b> of Main Board Meeting held on 6 July 2023 including any confidential minutes.</p> <p>AC asked the Board for notice of any changes to the minutes.</p> <p>CPS noted that an error on page 2, whereby it says, ‘at diocesan’, when it should say ‘at diocese.’</p> <p>Other than this one minor change to be implemented the Board agreed the minutes are an accurate representation. AC to sign. – <b>Action</b></p>	<b><u>AC</u></b>

	The Board agreed the confidential minutes are an accurate representation of the meeting. AC to sign. - <b>Action</b>	<b>AC</b>
6	<p><b>Carried Over Actions</b> AC confirmed that most actions have been discharged.</p> <p>LH confirmed that all actions that require discussion are on the agenda and so are further discussion at this point was deemed unnecessary.</p> <p>AC extended thanks to LH for her assistance in completing the actions listed.</p>	
7	<p><b>Out of committee activity</b> RE informed the Board of the resignation of Claire Mellor (CM) – Headteacher at Longcot and Fernham – over the summer.</p> <p>RE explained that steps had been implemented to ensure the continuity of leadership for the school. Two Heads from local schools across VAT and FLT are fulfilling the Headship, with Clare Sylvester (CS) covering three days and Andy Brown (AB) covering two days. They will cover the autumn term as a minimum, with both having agreed to stay longer if required.</p> <p>RE confirmed an advert has been placed for a substantive Head and that there has been interest. Interviews will be conducted imminently.</p> <p>Furthermore, RE confirmed movement within the LGB at Longcot and Fernham and that they were hoping to secure more governance to support the school and staff.</p> <p><i>SB – When is an Ofsted reinspection due? Will it be soon?</i> RE noted an Ofsted reinspection was expected in around 18 months, and so there is urgency to hire a substantive Head who can be grounded in the post before that occurs, to prove the changes implemented and the stability of the school.</p> <p><i>SB – And they do not have a full complement of Governors either?</i> RE confirmed this as correct, that the Chair of the LGB is resigning, however they have secured an external chair with vast experience, from a Wantage school, who has agreed to Chair the LGB until the next Ofsted inspection, granting further stability. RE commented that the VAT inclusion lead would be fulfilling the safeguarding role on the LGB which would contribute to the stability and support the school receive.</p> <p>LH noted that there were vacancies on the LGB for community Governors. This was confirmed by AL. AL explained that they are advertising the role as widely as possible, including the advertisement in letters disseminated at church and in newsletters.</p> <p>LH requested the Board recommend the position to anyone they deem suitable for the role.</p> <p>LH noted training some of the Board had received on SIAMs from CPS, and extended thanks on behalf of those who attended. LH commented that more training could be beneficial, and particularly if it could involve LGB members who sit at C of E Schools.</p>	

	<p>CPS confirmed it possible, and that she had hosted training with the VAT where Trustees and LGB members were in attendance.</p> <p>AC extended his thanks to CPS, noting that he felt his understanding to be far broader since the training.</p> <p><i>SB – Are we, as a Board of Trustees, at capacity or do we also have vacancies?</i></p> <p>AL confirmed there are now two vacancies on the Board.</p>	
8	<p><b>Compliance</b></p> <p>AC commented that all Board members need to have complied with the below listed items and, if they have not done so yet, to do so as soon as possible. RP is to check on GovHub to see which of the Trustees having completed all the compliance tasks and to chase those who have not. -</p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Declaration of interest personal or business</li> <li>2. Trustee Code of Conduct</li> <li>3. Skills Audit (attached) complete and submit</li> <li>4. Update Personal details</li> <li>5. Read section 1 KCSIE 2023</li> <li>6. Read Key for governors summary of all KCSIE changes</li> </ol>	<u>RP</u>
9	<p><b>Policies and New Statutory Guidance:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (To be discussed ahead of item 4)</li> </ol> <p>LW led on this item, informing the Board that the LADO in post is Jo Lloyd. LW felt this policy was improved due to being more succinct and clearer than prior versions whilst incorporating all the relevant guidance.</p> <p>LW commented that the Generalist Safeguarding Briefing was delivered across all FLT schools on an inset day in September.</p> <p>The annual safeguarding training is to be mandated across all staff. This is a marked improvement; previously not all training was mandatory and was delivered every three years.</p> <p>LW noted key changes to the filtering and monitoring implemented by the Trust.</p> <p>AL explained that FLT data is currently protected, and the pupils are protected from accessing anything inappropriate, however if an attempt to access filtered content is made, currently that information does not go anywhere. Following the changes, that information will be sent directly to the DSL, allowing the DSL to monitor all incidences. The FLT are finalising a policy to inform how DSLs handle the notifications. AL added that there would be two inboxes for monitoring, one pertaining to content blocked for students and another to content blocked for staff.</p> <p>RE noted that this a cross-Trust policy, streamlining their approach.</p> <p>LW informed the Board that, in the production of the policy, they will consider the workload impact for the DSL.</p>	

*SB - Presumably some blocked content could be searched in error? If you search a word that's innocuous, but is blocked and then flagged up? Would that be taken into consideration?*

*SF - We had a similar tool in my old trust, and it was helpful for the Head to speak to the teacher first when something was flagged, as sometimes it was entirely well-intentioned, and a pupil may have googled words from PSHE or similar lessons and it had flagged as inappropriate.*

LW confirmed that all flagged incidences would be looked at in context, which is the benefit of it being notified to the DSL rather than an external monitoring company.

LW drew the Board's attention to another key change, the increased focus on severe absenteeism. Noted that severe absenteeism should always be viewed from a safeguarding perspective as if children are absent, they lose the protective factors gained from school and are at increased risk of harm. She commented that there is presently a high percentage of absenteeism across the Trust.

LW drew the Board's attention to the Safer Recruitment policy, explaining the focus on not only ensuring all checks are carried out but ensuring that the prospective employee is aware of the checks and what they involve.

LW informed the Board that each school must complete audits and submit their 175 reports to the Local Authority by 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

LW noted a key point in the Safer Recruitment Policy is the job descriptions for the DSL and Deputy DSL and the inclusion of Appendix A, differentiating between the responsibilities of the two roles.

Another key point LW highlighted was on page 6, the culture of school ethos. It is vitally important to develop a culture within staff where they understand and believe that anything could happen within their school community, to one of their pupils; this will ensure staff remain vigilant.

LW informed the Board that checks for volunteers will now be as rigorous as those done on staff.

LW commented how important it was to see the words 'dignity' and 'respect' within the policy, impressing the importance of these values when interacting with all members of the school community.

LW drew the Board's attention to section 4, enabling children to keep themselves safe. She confirmed a new PSHE course, Jigsaw, had been implemented for year 7. LW impressed upon the Board the importance of ensuring Jigsaw is being taught, noting there has been some reticence from staff who feel they do not have the capacity, or in some cases the confidence in their skills, to deliver it.

All FLT primary schools have used NSPCC 'Speak Out Stay Safe' materials with their pupils. LW confirmed this would be repeated annually.

LW informed the Board that she would be looking at the Trust's antibullying policy and procedures to see how robust they are and ensure they are working as intended.

LW impressed the importance of all schools providing reasonable adjustments for pupils with additional needs. She commented that it is key, and they must ensure that the expectations of those children are different to those laid out across the board, and they are clearly laid out in child-specific plans. LW noted that the FLT primary schools are successful in implementing this, but FCC requires stronger focus in this area. A hurdle facing all schools is a lack of availability of resources required to support vulnerable children.

LW explained a change in procedure with the removal of the no names service when contacting LCSS, meaning staff reporting safeguarding concerns must identify the child concerned. Due to this, staff must discuss with parents about issues being forwarded to the LCSS worker.

*SB – Is that creating additional workload for the school rather than for the OCC?*

LW explained that would not necessarily be the case, as the LCSS worker would hold networking events with all DSLs from the County where concerns would be brought and discussed together.

PT commented that often safeguarding concerns are an immediate issue and so felt that waiting until the next scheduled networking meeting would often be too late. SB concurred.

LW impressed the importance of the LGB Members all understanding and cohering with safeguarding policies. LW noted that LGBs may question the need for them to undergo stringent safeguarding training when they have limited contact directly with pupils, however it is vital they have knowledge of safeguarding to hold their schools to account if necessary.

LW confirmed safeguarding updates would be issued every Wednesday across both FLT and VAT.

*JN - What evidence do we have that our safeguarding is effective? We have evidence we are doing it and ticking the boxes, but what evidence do we use to prove its efficacy?*

LW explained that the evidence from the 175 audits will allow the school to reflect on the efficacy of their safeguarding practice as it comprises a self-evaluation. She added that they would be informed in the spring of action plans arising from the audits, so they can evaluate the efficacy then too. Furthermore, an internal audit of each school happens annually.

PT added that the Quality of Education meetings report on and discuss this also.

*JN – What opportunities do we have to learn from mistakes that occurred or instances in which procedure or protocol has not been followed?*

LW responded that schools conduct reflection meetings involving the DSL, Deputy DSLs and Governors to discuss management of cases and where improvements could be made.

JN – In the policy there is reference to there sometimes being paper recordings of incidents as well as electronic recordings; if some recordings are paper based, how do we ensure reporting remains robust? LW informed the Board that all schools report electronically using CPOMs and, in an instance where something was handwritten, it would be scanned in to CPOMs.

LH – In relation to manual records, on the basis that the expectation is for all staff to use CPOMs, I would like to strengthen that directive within this policy. I suggest we adjust the wording in the policy to ensure it reflects the necessity to always use CPOMs and to do so accurately. **Action**

LW

SB – I would like clarity on how we meet the expectation that staff must inform the local authority if they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. I am concerned about the magnitude of the obligation placed upon them by the expectation to be aware of this in all situations. SF responded that this task would not be too difficult; that within the school community staff will regularly and easily become aware of changes to family set structures through conversing with children and families.

LH concurred that it is a large responsibility, though acknowledged the necessity of its implementation with the recent prevalence of high-profile cases of heinous abuse within familial fostering structures.

SF – It is about ensuring there are no loopholes and reinforcing that it is everybody's duty to report anything which could be a risk factor.

LH drew attention to the fact there was no reference in the document to supervision for the DSLs, reminding the Board that this was a critical factor raised last year and needs including. LH noted that there are areas of responsibility that sit at Trust level and areas that sit at school level, but only school is mentioned here and so that needs adjusting. **Action**

LW

LW asked the Board if they were happy for her to make the amendments discussed and then publish the policy, conscious that the schools are awaiting the approved policy.

Board agreed, and LH suggested it was sent to Heads for immediate implementation once the changes were actioned, and the LGBs would be entrusted to ensure the schools were implementing the policy correctly and had added their own information to the policy on their website.

The Board approved the policy on this basis.  
AC extended thanks to LW for all her work in relation to the policy.

## 2. FLT Behaviour Statement

LW informed the Board that the FLT Behaviour Statement had recently been discussed by Heads within the trust at a collaborative meeting. She stressed the importance of understanding and implementing the FLT's principles, which are based on maintaining positive relationships with all pupils and understanding that all behaviour is a form of communication.

	<p>LW drew the Board’s attention to page 2 of the statement, listing what the FLT expect to see in each school’s Positive Behaviour Policy, explaining that all schools in the Trust base their PBP on this statement. She impressed the importance of recognising when further support is needed for pupils beyond their individual plans.</p> <p>LW commented on further support they have for behaviour within the Trust, such as access to training to provide a trauma-based, nurturing approach to less desirable behaviour. This has been implemented in two primaries, however LW noted the importance to review how this would be rolled out at secondary level, with the Headteacher at FCC involved in discussions surrounding this.</p> <p>LW noted that the Headteacher at FCC is undergoing a period of heavy focus on behaviour within the school and the way in which staff handle said behaviour. FCC’s current behaviour policy is very stringent based upon the issues and exclusions they have had, so currently FCC does not sit in line with the Trust’s nurturing approach. LW acknowledged the necessity to be firm within FCC but highlighted the need for re-evaluation of the policy for consistency across the Trust.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3. Suspension and Exclusion Guidance</p> <p>Leah Spiers (LS) and Vicky Roberts (VR) from VAT led training for Heads from FLT and VAT on this guidance and received excellent feedback. LW commented that the focus was on proactive prevention and the strategies that can be implemented to attempt to avoid suspension. The changes to guidance highlight adjustments that need to be made to the exclusion policies, and the protocol surrounding this should be available for presenting at the next cross-trust meeting.</p> <p><i>JN - How do you think it will change our policies?</i></p> <p>LW confirmed the changes would be minor but effective, such as only one member of staff tracking the changes and patterns for students at risk of suspension and / or exclusion.</p> <p>RE further added that they would ensure there was only one person dealing with an incident, to allow consistency in handling.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4. Uniform Policy</p> <p>LW noted that all schools in the FLT have a uniform policy based on the model policies from the key but adapted for each school. Eventually they would like one policy that is consistent across the Trust.</p> <p>AC extended further thanks to LW, on behalf of the Board, for all her efforts in the work surrounding these policies.</p>	
10	<p><b>2023/24 Link Trustee Roles:</b></p> <p>AC extended thanks to LH for her work on this item.</p> <p>AC asked the Board to inform him of any changes to responsibilities they have allocated.</p> <p>None were declared.</p>	



	<p>AC informed the Board that the expectation for this academic year is for a minimum of one visit per school per term and instructed the Trustees to engage with schools and diarise their scheduled visits. He suggested it would be worth considering an annual schedule of visits be implemented.</p> <p><b>Action</b> AC would also like the Board to consider by the next meeting whether any roles should be added or removed.</p>	<u>All Trustees</u>
11	<p><b>Letters from DofE</b> None this cycle.</p>	
<b>Strategic Matters</b>		
12	<p><b>Trust’s Strategic Vision 2021/2025 and FLT Improvement Plan for 2023-2024:</b> AL commented that the Board had been given a draft of the plan in the summer term which had since been tweaked and returned for approval. AC encouraged the Board to share their comments.</p> <p><i>JN – How do we envisage this is used? Is it a document we are expected to have to comply, or one which is actively used?</i> RE commented that it is shared with the Headteachers of all the schools and the key priorities within the FLT Improvement Plan fit within the School Development Plans (SDPs); the two are linked and aligned in parts, meaning the FLT plan is implemented at school level.</p> <p><i>JN – May I confirm the direction, is it the FLT Plan which informs the SDP?</i> RE confirmed that the Trust set the direction, which informs the SDP(s). It is about channelling the schools’ priorities so they do not overextend their resources across a vast variety of areas, but instead are guided to focus on their primary considerations.</p> <p><i>JN – My reflection on the FLT plan is that there is too much included to allow us to be focused as a Trust and as Trustees.</i> RE commented that was an interesting reflection to consider, though noted that when delivering the plan to Headteachers he had highlighted and focused on only those sections most pertinent to them, and so did not feel that reflection would extend to them.</p> <p><i>LW – The agendas for Heads meetings feed into this plan, there is little I would want removed. The three key strategic improvements noted are musts across all schools and we need to be driving their implementation.</i></p> <p>AL commented that they have previously reported the progress in relation to the FLT plan to Trustees at the end of each term. She noted that some of the deliverables are specifically for the Trustees and so would not want to remove any, reminding the Board that these are their priorities for the coming year.</p> <p><i>AC- Could we do more to keep strategically focused?</i> LW responded that it has not been utilised enough previously, and greater emphasis on the plan allows the Board to maintain strategic focus and ensure they meet the objectives noted.</p>	

	<p>RE noted that he had found referring to the plan in meetings helpful. PT further noted that he too had found it an important reference tool in Quality of Education (QofE) meetings.</p> <p>AC requested an intentional sharp focus on this plan and its use for Trustees to be an <b>agenda point</b> at next meeting. - <b>Action</b></p> <p>PT suggested it would be useful to include on the agenda which number or section the discussion is in relation to, and likewise for the QofE report.</p> <p>The Board approved the plan.</p>	<b><u>RP</u></b>
13	<p><b>Confidential items</b> <i>see separate confidential minutes.</i></p> <p>a. <i>Future engagement with VAT</i></p> <p><b>MG left the meeting at 19:16</b></p> <p>b. <i>FCC Action Plan</i></p>	
14	<p><b>Various Documents for Trustees to approve:</b></p> <p>a. Scheme of Delegation 2023/2024</p> <p>b. L&amp;F Varied Scheme of Delegation for 2023/2024</p> <p>c. Changes to the Academies Trust Handbook (previously sent out via GovHub to all)</p> <p>CPS commented that, for item b, RE, which had been moved into the curriculum, was still showing under 'Religious Character' for Longcot and Fernham school and would require updating. - <b>Action</b></p> <p>All documents were approved. AC extended thanks to the Board and to AL and LH for their work on this.</p>	<b><u>LH / AL</u></b>
15	<p><b>Trust Committees</b></p> <p>Terms of reference committee Chairs/Vice Chairs to seek approval:</p> <p>a. <i>QofE</i></p> <p>PT confirmed the only change was addition of a meeting in term one.</p> <p>b. <i>Resources</i></p> <p>c. <i>Audit &amp; Risk</i></p> <p>Nothing further to note. All approved by the Board.</p>	
16	<p><b>Report from Quality of Education Committee</b></p> <p>PT extended apologies for the report not being available on Governor Hub in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>PT summarised the key points from the report being concerns about FCC (though noting that RE had in this meeting demonstrated the positive actions in place to support them), concerns with safeguarding at Folly View, The Elms having concerns about year two, and that Shrivenham school are relocating in two years and the concern being that the focus on this by staff could impact the education of the children.</p> <p>LH commented that the Trust need to be mindful to support the staff at Shrivenham in their relocation and not expect them to do so during their annual leave. AL confirmed that the staff would be given an additional day of leave to facilitate the move.</p>	

PT informed the Board that a key concern for primary schools was writing, where results were lower than hoped, however commented on the excellent progress they were making in phonics.

PT noted that attendance is a concern across the FLT, however further commented on how the SLTs across the Trust should be commended on a strong start to the academic year.

PT thanked LW for data she contributed showing how FCC performed at GCSE and A Levels. He noted that A Level results were low, but that the data showed this was a commonality nationally. He commented the need to focus on their forward steps (as opposed to too much retrospective focus), particularly on the 6<sup>th</sup> form at FCC and ensuring its success. He noted the addition of academic coaching for students at FCC.

*JN – Looking at the disappointing A Level results, how might that feed into the strategic vision for the provision of a sixth form at FCC, in terms of what courses we offer? I am conscious we do not want to narrow our provision unduly, but it could be beneficial to narrow to our strengths.*

PT confirmed this was not discussed, with RE adding that it could be taken forward for discussion at the next QofE meeting.

PT commented, on being questioned, that the challenges surrounding attainment in maths at FCC are being addressed.

LH further commented that the White Rose system has been implemented and has been rolled out across years 7 to 10 and is expected to have a significant impact as it is a marked change in way maths is delivered in classrooms. Long term they are expecting to see great improvement. LH noted that year 10 and 11 this year would need a sharper focus on maths, as it will be too soon for them to experience the benefit of White Rose before their exams.

PT informed the Board of a trend noted, whereby effort decreased significantly for the students between year 10 and 11. They do not know the exact reason, however see a correlation between increased mental health issues, anxiety surrounding the exams specifically and generalised anxiety amongst the year 11 students and this drop in their efforts.

SB noted that the last two years results are not showing on the website. LW confirmed she will ensure they are added. – **Action**

LW

PT noted a further concern across the FLT was the consistency of reporting for incidences of child-on-child abuse and bullying, meaning the data was difficult to analyse accurately. Furthermore, there is a need to examine the commonality of the use of CPOMS, noting that the children are well protected, but that staff are not using the CPOMS system accurately to check trends.

*AC – Is this a training issue?*

PT commented that it is a consistency issue, with a need to impress upon the staff that the integrity of the data, at present, is not of a high enough standard to interrogate.

LH noted that there would hopefully be an improvement now that there was safeguarding lead for the Trust – who started on 25<sup>th</sup> September - working across the schools.

	<p>AL further noted that an advertisement had been issued for a SEN lead.</p> <p>PT commented that the Board need to ensure they visit the schools in the Trust more regularly and that, should they receive an Ofsted visit, at present the irregularity of Board visits would be marked as a weakness.</p> <p>RE suggested that FLT consider structuring visits as done in the VAT, whereby each Board meeting location is rotated across the schools, with the Head conducting a tour prior to the meeting commencing. PT commented that this would be beneficial but noted that it is also important that the Board visit during school hours. - <b>Action</b></p> <p>AC noted an extraordinarily high number of suspensions and exclusions. PT concurred, noting that the data was currently being interrogated by Sarah Gristwood (SG) and would be explored in more depth at the next QofE meeting.</p> <p>LW commented that the suspensions were often for persistent disruptive behaviour and had been used as a tactic to eradicate that behaviour, but as shown by the repeated suspensions of the same students for the same behaviour, this is an unsuccessful tool, and the focus needs now to be on the nurturing approach to behaviour discussed earlier; suspensions are an unreliable means of bringing about change.</p> <p>LH commented that the suspension data requires further definition, and it would be beneficial to know the year groups and exact number of students, rather than percentages which are more challenging to analyse. - <b>Action</b></p> <p>PT extended thanks to SG for the report and to RE for his proactive approach to the QofE.</p>	<p><u>All Trustees</u></p> <p><u>PT</u></p>
17	<p><b>Report from RESOURCES:</b> JN informed the Board that the meeting, chaired by Tim Clark (TC), produced an effective report. The report shows RAAC not to be an issue within the Trust and currently finances are shown to be stable. The report noted resourcing implications with EHCPs and with finding appropriate TAs. JN noted that the implication of changes to monitoring within KCSIE was also a key discussion.</p> <p>AC asked the Board to put forward any questions on the report.</p> <p>CPS commented that resourcing is difficult at present, particularly in recruiting TAs. AL responded that FLT had recently contracted to a new recruitment database, 'My New Term', which streamlines all applications (staff, support staff and volunteers) and has provided a considerable saving.</p> <p>AL informed the Board that the resources committee considered FLT's strategy from an estates perspective, confirming they are on target with spending.</p> <p><i>AC – Is there anything with regards to RAAC that could cause us to deviate from that strategy?</i></p>	

	<p>AL commented that FLT have followed DofE guidance on RAAC and submitted their risk assessments for auditing, for further clarity on their estate and confirmation that RAAC is not an issue. AL noted the FLT are confident that the audit will confirm this, as AL attended the DofE webinar on RAAC where she was instructed that, having followed the guidance from the DofE, they should be fine.</p> <p>AL commented, with regards to the Trust Financial Report, that there was little change from P10 to the end of the year. She noted that FCC may fall into a minor deficit, however there was little concern surrounding this due to their reserves being high. AL to post P11 – 12 as soon as possible. - <b>Action</b></p> <p>AL extended apologies for the delay in the compliance report being uploaded to the website, noting they are awaiting an audit for Longcot &amp; Fernham. AL to request Charlotte Dreyer check progress on actions. - <b>Action</b></p> <p>AL commented that the schools should action any items on their reports immediately upon receipt, and that she would like to check the next round of reports to ensure everything had been actioned promptly.</p> <p>AC extended thanks to AL and JN.</p>	<p><u>AL</u></p> <p><u>CD</u></p>
18	<p><b>Visit Reports from Link Trustees:</b> AC noted there were no link reports and reiterated importance of all Link Trustees attending their schools. - <b>Action</b></p>	<p><u>All Link Trustees</u></p>
19	<p><b>Risk Register</b> AL noted that the only additional risk added relates to having a part-time CEO due to RE being a joint CEO with VAT. AL commented that this is not a significant risk to the Trust but must be acknowledged, nonetheless. AL asked the Board if they approved the risk register to be published, noting that it would be monitored throughout the year.</p> <p><i>PT – Three or more schools in the Trust are rated as requires improvement or inadequate; would that still be seen as a ‘yellow’ level risk, or should it be increased to ‘red’?</i> RE responded that he considered it a ‘red’ level concern as, though they feel they have the matter in hand, the potential reputational damage with the DofE is a big risk for the FLT.</p> <p>LH commented that it would be prudent to allow a term or two to unfold prior to moving this to red, to see if the action plans have resulted in improvement. LH noted it should be an action on the agenda for the next meeting to check if this should be moved. - <b>Action</b></p> <p><i>JN – The residual risk here is the finance and that is in red too.</i> AL explained that this is because the pay awards are yet to go through but reassured the Board of the Trust’s sound financial position.</p> <p><i>AC – Should school results colour somewhere on the risk register? SB – And could the poor results trigger a school inspection?</i> PT explained the results are a risk to the individual school more than the Trust itself, and that they would not trigger an inspection. RE further added that they would be viewed by Ofsted when an inspection was undertaken and would form part of the report, so results</p>	<p><u>RP</u></p>

	were still a risk from an inspection perspective. Reiterated that they would also be viewed negatively by the DofE.	
<b>Trust Board Matters</b>		
20	<p><b>Events in hand:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Autumn Seminar 2023:</b> Wednesday 11 October 2023 in person in 6.30PM FCC Main Hall (+ help tidy up room) AC expressed the importance of all Trustees attending if able to, suggesting that it would be an excellent opportunity for the Board to spend time with the local LGBs promoting their aim for better training, better knowledge and overall improved governance across the Trust.</li> <li>• <b>November 2023 Board Meeting:</b> Thursday 16 November 2023 Via Teams at 4.30 p.m. - 6.30 p.m. AL informed the Board that they are trialling meeting with the Members on a more regular basis this academic year. Feedback at the end of the academic year will inform whether this becomes normal procedure beyond this year.</li> <li>• <b>FLT Board Meeting &amp; Members AGM 2023:</b> Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 On being asked, LH confirmed the roles of the Members in relation to the Trustees, informing the Trustees that the Members hold the Trustees to account in ensuring their support of schools, particularly those requiring improvement, is adequately implemented and beneficial.  AC commented on the benefit of the involvement and dialogue received from members.</li> </ul>	
<b>Any Other Business</b>		
21	<p><b>As notified to the Chair before the meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional inset day for Academic Year 2024/25 on 4<sup>th</sup> November to enable a Trust Wide Conference AL informed the Board that they require Trustee approval to implement this.</li> </ul> <p><i>SB – Why could the conference not be done in one of the usual five inset days? And would this be something that occurred every year?</i> AL explained that the agendas had already been set for the five usual inset days and so they would require this additional one to run the conference. This would potentially become an annual event. AL further noted that, as a Trust, they were allowed by law to have an additional inset day and it would be a case of exercising that right. AL explained that, unlike on the usual five inset days, support staff would be paid to be in work and so they would not be negatively impacted by the addition of an extra day. RE commented that it was the law to have five inset days a year to allow teachers to complete their mandatory training, and so having an extra to accommodate the conference was preferable.</p> <p><i>LH – On the basis that it will be a big training day, would there be scope to include something for the Governors and to allow them to attend too?</i> Both AL and RE confirmed this was a potential and commented on its usefulness.</p>	

*SB – Could it be brought into the five standard days the following year? That way the pupils are not being removed from school for an additional day.*

AL explained this was a possibility, but it would require them to reduce the time the teachers were given to complete their training.

*LH – If we give the staff sufficient notice of there being an additional inset day then they should be able to adjust their plans to ensure allow them to teach the syllabus as intended still.*

AC commented that the Board need to be aware that they must have those conversations with any staff who say they do not have adequate time.

*CPS – Likewise, you must be prepared to have conversations with unhappy parents about why their children are off for an additional day.*

*AC – I propose that, if we are aligned, we grant the additional day for next year and then review what we do beyond that.*

All agreed. Additional inset day for 2024 – 25 approved.

- Update on Southmoor Pre-school following its Ofsted report and closure.

AL reminded the Board of their prior discussion regarding Southmoor preschool wanting to join the FLT. AL informed the Board that since their last meeting Southmoor preschool was visited by Ofsted and subsequently closed suddenly at the start of the summer, leaving Southmoor with no provision.

AL commented that they had hoped that OCC would allow the FLT to adopt the setting and re-open it, however this was denied. The OCC will be putting the preschool out for bidding, under the instruction that the successful bidder is to open a setting that takes children from 9 months to 4 years old. AL explained that this is being driven by the Governments agenda of offering free childcare for 9 month old plus. The successful bidder is also to offer year-round childcare and wrap-around care, all of which left the FLT in a difficult position regarding how to proceed.

AL informed the Board that the Preschool building is integral to the John Blandy (JBL) site and, having discussed with Headteacher Suzanne Elliot (SE), she is keen to pursue it. SE has spoken to the JBL LGB who are supportive of her pursuing the opportunity.

*SB – How would it work if the preschool is on the school site but open all year as opposed to term-time?*

RE commented that that is a discussion for future meetings should they be successful in their bid, but that for now the importance is deciding if the Board approve the FLT pursuing it.

*AC – Would we have an advantage over other bidders, with the building being on the JBL site?*

RE confirmed they would not have an advantage, however commented that the OCC want the FLT to apply which can only be viewed positively.

	<p><i>LH – It would be beneficial to have the opportunity to look at what this would include and what the cost would be to the Trust. Would there be an issue with access in and out of the site?</i> RE confirmed it would and would need investigating should they bid and it progress.</p> <p><i>CPS – Is there a risk to welfare and work balance for SE? Should the nursery be visited by Ofsted during non-term time would she be called in? We do not want her to be overworked by taking it on.</i> RE explained that, in terms of an Ofsted inspection specifically, no she would not be called in as Ofsted only conduct visits in term time, however the concern regarding SE’s time must be considered when progressing.</p> <p>Board approved FLT pursuing Southmoor preschool further.</p> <p>AC closed the meeting, extending thanks to the Board and particularly to CPS for her service.</p>	
19	<b>Future Board Meetings</b>	
	<p><b>2023</b>  <b>16 Nov via Teams 4.30pm – 6.30pm</b>  <b>7 Dec in person 6pm – 7pm - FCC Main Hall</b></p> <p><b>2024</b>  <b>18 Jan via Teams 4.30 pm – 6.30 pm</b>  <b>21 March via Teams 4.30 pm – 6.30 pm</b>  <b>9 May in person 6 pm – 8 pm - FCC Main Hall</b>  <b>11 July in person 6 pm –8 pm (last meeting) - FCC Main Hall</b></p>	
	<b>MEETING END 20:30</b>	

Signed and Approved by: