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| **STA Board   Minutes   25/03/2021** |
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| Virtual  Thursday, March 25, 2021  4pmChair: Sarah Noon   Clerk: Jennifer Barnacle    |
| FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked. |
| Please ensure all documents are read prior to the meeting and that you have completed any action points attributed to you. |
| Governors Attending: | >Sarah Noon, Paul Chipchase, Christopher Reynolds, Maria Jane, Brian Underwood, Phillip Bateman, Mary Delahunty  |
| Governors Apologies: | >Terry Smith |
|  |
| Non Governors Attending: | >Jennifer Barnacle, Mary Robson, Martin Fitzwilliam, Paula Cooper, Neil Lockyer, Antoinette Bouwens, Mike Hobbs, Marcella Gillespie, Ruth Hurcombe, Tom Shannon |
| Non Governors Apologies: | > |

Bottom of Form |
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| **Agenda Item 1** | **Welcome** |
| **MINUTE** |  The Chair welcomed new Director, Maria Jane, to the Board and introductions were made. |
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| **Agenda Item 2** | **Opening Liturgy** |
| **MINUTE** |  TS delivered the opening liturgy. |
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| **Agenda Item 3** | **Minutes of last meeting, matters arising and conflicts of interests and business and pecuniary interests** |
| **MINUTE** |  The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.There were no declarations of interest for the purpose of this meeting.**Matters arising**Employer Assistance report to HR committee in Jan21. MR DoneMD to meet with HR re wellbeing. MD/PC OutstandingAll chairs of committees to review the terms of reference before the next committee meetings in January to ensure that committees are covering everything within the terms. OutstandingUpload Admissions policy to website. Send to all schools for website. AB DoneAgree dates for Catholic Life Committee. PC/SN/PB . An initial meeting had been held to look at the terms of reference on 22/3. The first meeting will be on 26 April at 2.30pmCompare number of safeguarding incidents with similar schools in city. MG Outstanding but being worked on.Ensure LGB's have access to compliance software. AB  Has been rolled out to schools and support being given where necessary. LGB's to be given access.Prepare a summary of review points and comments raised by the Finance Committee for next Board meeting.MH Outstanding. In future will form part of FD report.Circulate CEO objectives to Board. CR OutstandingInform MR of outcome of CEO appraisal. SN DoneDistribute self evaluation feedback. SN Done |
| **ACTION** | MD to meet with HR re wellbeing. MD/PCAll chairs of committees to review the terms of reference before the next committee meetings in April to ensure that committees are covering everything within the terms. To be on agenda for committee meetings.Compare number of safeguarding incidents with similar schools in city. MGEnsure LGB's have access to compliance software. ABPrepare a summary of review points and comments raised by the Finance Committee. MHCirculate CEO objectives to Board. CR |
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| **Agenda Item 4** | **Governance & Correspondence** |
| **MINUTE** | 1. MJ to undertake a full induction and to consider what committees she wishes to join. She has agreed to become the SEND link director.
2. A further additional Director will join on 1 April, Mary Mihovilovic.
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| **DECISION** | MJ to become SEND link director. |
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| **Agenda Item 5** | **Legal and Regulatory** |
| **MINUTE** |  The resignation of Gail Neil and the appointment of Karen McVea as Headteacher at HC Leicester was noted.De Lisle is reccruiting a new lay chaplain and interviews will take place in May. |
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| **Agenda Item 6** | **HR** |
| **MINUTE** |  MR's report was noted.1. C19 Shielding finishes on 1 April.A number of staff will be returning to school . The ' Welcome back to school' sessions will be rerun for them to ensure they are aware of all changes that have been introduced. Individual risk assessments are in place and staff will be supported fully. There are currently around 12 staff shielding. Most are keen to return. There may be some anxiety about returning. We have been notified that one staff member has been advised not to return yet and has a medical certificate supporting this.
2. The CMAT is advising all staff over 28 weeks pregnant to work from home if possible.
3. Three documents were presented for approval:Induction entitlement(setting out minimum induction requirements for all staff. It is applicable to all schools but has some degree of flexibility built into it). Amended Disciplinary Policy. Amended Grievance policy. (These 2 documents are CES documents adapted to suit the structure of the CMAT and to ensure terminology is consistant and that sequences are clarified). MR confirmed that as part of the induction process staff are given a checklist which will have several contacts for them so they can identify who to go to if they have any problems. A 'buddy' scheme will be in place. The Board approved all three documents.
4. A general pay award is not anticipated for 2021-22. There is however a pay claim for support staff of 10% going through the process and if unsuccessful it could lead to the threat of industrial action.
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| **DECISION** | The induction entitlement document was approved.The Disciplinary Policy was approved.The Grievance Policy was approved. |
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| **Agenda Item 7** | **Catholic Life & Chaplaincy** |
| **MINUTE** |  TS presented his report.SN stated that the links contained in it were very useful and encouraged directors to access them.The Executive Team have discussed setting up a Hardship Fund for those pupils who may not be PP but who miss out on opportunities for spiritual development due to financial hardship, eg trips to The Briars, pilgrimages.TS stated he was seeking external funding for this fund and had received £800 to date from members of the Loughborough Catenian circle  and had confirmation that the circle will make the fund it’s chosen charity to raise funds for over the next year. A number of other leads are being followed up and it is hoped that the fund will be in place  for September 2021, and that there will be a mechanism for schools to be able to bid for funding for students who are in need.MH clarified that using taxpayers money meant for educational purposes to set up a hardship fund focused on spiritual development could be viewed as inappropriate use, especially if  requests for funding something educational were turned down. It is much clearer if external funding can be secured. Schools can also raise money for the hardship fund.SN stated that the members and the Diocese were keen to see such funds established and one of the CMAT's already had a fund in place.The CMAT has also received a legacy of £750 from Fr Terry, Hinckley Ministry. He had left a sum of money to be used for  supporting disadvantaged families. This was split between the 4 CMAT's equally by the Diocese,NL stated that in addition to having a fund for supporting the spiritual development of economically disadvantaged pupils, there could be a broader fund to support pupils to enable them to access opportunities etc. This will continue to be explored. The Catholic Life Committee will have oversight of the hardship fund.St Josephs Leicester had previously had a member of staff that undertook chaplaincy duties but she had retired at the end of the Advent term 2020. Until a chaplain can be put in place the school will need to use its own staff to deliver chaplaincy provision.TS was identifying all schools that required chaplaincy support. Two new chaplaincy apprentices (based at St Pauls and St Martins) will start in September 2021 and it is hoped that after a year they will be able to take over a hub of primary schools each.It was noted that at primary level many staff named as chaplains are not given time to do their chaplaincy role.A Chaplain is being recruited at De Lisle.   |
| **DECISION** | Approved the setting up of a Hardship Fund to focus on spiritual development. |
| **CHALLENGE** | **Why would it be difficult for the Trust to set up its own Hardship Fund using the pooled finances?How long has St Joseph's Leicester been without chaplaincy provision? How is this being addressed?** |
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| **Agenda Item 8** | **Safeguarding** |
| **MINUTE** |  MG presented her report.The KCSIE consultation has finished and the outcome should be known in June.  Consideration will then be given to see what the CMAT Board and schools need to do to comply with the revised guidance. The revised KCSIE will be published and be effective from September 1st 2021.It is likely that there will be a bigger role in safeguarding for Trust Board Directors.It was noted that having an executive safeguarding director in place is a major advantage for STA CMAT as it helps with consistancy across schools and with ensuring that DSL's and directors have access to up to date information and CPD.MG will be undertaking a mapping exercise looking at responsibilities of directors , what they do now and what they need to do to comply with new legislation and how this links with LGB's. MG stated that the safer recruitment policy is to be reviewed shortly. There is a requirement for at least one person on the recruitment panel to have undertaken safer recruitment training. Recruitment checks are undertaken centrally and it is the directors role to confirm that this is correctly done. The Board have a responsibility for ongoing monitoring.MG and AB will be running a training session on checking the Single Central Record for LGB chairs and Safeguarding governors. A named governor on each LGB should be checking the SCR and the Trust Board should be ensuring that this is being done.A Trust Director should be checking the central team SCR.It was noted that Ofsted will check if thee are gaps on SCR's. External auditors also look at the SCR and had previously highlighted some gaps which have been addressed.Safer recruitment training will be run in the Pentecost term.MG stated that the role of the DSL is continually expanding and the consultation is likely to make them responsible for the outcomes of those pupils who have a social worker . Given the expansion of the role there may be a need to take teaching responsibilities away from some DSL's. |
| **CHALLENGE** | **Given the emphasis on safeguarding, should directors be involved in recruitment?** |
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| **Agenda Item 9** | **Strategic Plan** |
| **MINUTE** |  This document had been shared with directors by email. It is also available on the One Drive.The document was noted. |
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| **Agenda Item 10** | **School Transport** |
| **MINUTE** |  1. The cost of transport is now significant for pupils travelling by school bus to our secondary schools.  Average costs are around £650 per pupil for De Lisle and £595 per pupil for English Martyrs’ and St Paul’s. For the city schools, there is a concern that this could become a cost prohibitive situation in future, actively discouraging parents (especially parents of Catholic pupils) from applying for places at EM & SPs.  Both schools are currently oversubscribed and have good numbers of baptised Catholic pupils seeking places.
2. Ausden Clark, the current provider of all of St Paul’s buses and one of English Martyrs’ has pulled out of offering the services next school year, citing difficulties of securing payment from parents and lower than anticipated numbers using the services.
3. At De Lisle, the September 2021 intake looks like being the lowest on record for Catholic pupils, with numbers projected to be only 33% baptised Catholic pupils.  Of particular concern are the facts that there are few   pupils coming from some of  its feeder schools  Overall the school is  oversubscribed, albeit the pupils are coming from non-Catholic feeder schools predominantly.
4. There will be a survey undertaken of all current Year 6 parents early next term to establish their reasons for choosing the secondary school they did, to try to understand the extent to which transport costs/time influenced their decisions. The Board suggested that this is rolled out to year 5 pupils too.
5. There will be a renewed marketing strategy ready for the entire “3-19 Catholic Education Journey” for roll out in September.  This will focus on EYFS, Year 7 and Year 12, with the aim of reaffirming  our message, and outlining the distinctiveness of Catholic Education.
6. We have opened negotiations with Ausden Clark to find a way of providing the service for invoicing parental payments internally, so that we can resume the service for St Paul’s and hopefully English Martyrs’.
7. The Board agreed that transportation and the cost of it had long been an issue for Catholic schools. It can be particularly prohibitive if a family has more than one child using the bus service. If the CMAT was paying for the bus service and then collecting the money from parents it would offer a monthly direct debit option to help spread the cost and also to give some reassurance of fee recovery.
8. A broader hardship fund could potential help fund transportation costs but it was noted that costs would be significant.
9. NL agreed to investigate what percentage of fees  Ausden Clarke struggle to collect and to establish if they would be interested in  the CMAT underwriting a percentage of this. Consideration should also be given to seeing if any external funders/sponsors could be found for the transport.
10. The Board agreed that the cost of transport is a significant  issue for the CMAT and efforts must be made to resolve it. If transport issues affect numbers of pupils this will have an impact of income . If fewer Catholic children attend due to transportation issues then the nature of schools may well change.  NL agreed to explore the options outlined above  and to report back in due course.
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| **ACTION** | NL agreed to investigate what percentage of fees Ausden Clarke struggle to collect and to establish if they would be interested in the CMAT underwriting a percentage of this. Consideration should also be given to seeing if any external funders/sponsors could be found for the transport. |
| **CHALLENGE** | **Could a hardship fund be used to pay for transportation? See 8What Percentage of fees do Ausden Clarke struggle to collect? Could the CMAT underwrite that? See 9** |
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| **Agenda Item 11** | **Business Services/ Health and Safety** |
| **MINUTE** |  AB presented her reports.1. The Health and Safety audit undertaken by our insurers was complete. Issues had been RAG rated and AB had met with schools that had issues that needed addressing promptly.
2. The CMAT needs better overview of what health and safety training staff in the schools have undertaken. A training matrix will be compiled to help identify any gaps.
3. CR had met with AB in respect of health and safety and the individual schools had been reviewed. Schools have welcomed the compliance checklist as it helps to identify outstanding issues. Some schools have embraced the system fully but others need some assistance to embed it. In some cases this is because premises officers need IT support  and the CMAT is providing this. CR and AB will meet regularly to review health and safety.
4. In respect of Holy Cross Leicester, the decision on The Arc was postponed to allow the new Headteacher to assess what she wants to do with the space. The building continues to be maintained and heated.
5. Sacred Heart Loughborough is awaiting permission from the ESFA to sell the small area of land at the side of the property. The money from the sale will go directly to the school. The matter has been outstanding for some time and efforts continue to resolve the matter.
6. The website compliance audit is complete and has been shared with Headteachers. The Board asked that it is shared with LGB's as they have a responsibility to monitor compliance. The Board noted the areas that are non compliant. Schools have been given a timeline to bring their websites up to date. Websites will be audited annually.
 |
| **ACTION** | Share website compliance checklist with LGB's. Put on agenda for LGBs. Clerk. |
| **CHALLENGE** | **Why are some schools not using the compliance software fully? See 3Why was the Schools Condition Allocation (SCA) decision at Holy Cross Leicester postponed? See 4What is happening regarding the sale of the land at Sacred Heart Loughborough? See 5** |
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| **Agenda Item 12** | **Finance** |
| **MINUTE** |  MH presented his report.1. The audit and risk committee had considered the SRMA form on 25 February and provided responses.It recommends that the Board approves it.The Board approved it and MH will submit it to ESFA.
2. The audit and risk committee had considered the updated Finance Procedures and Policies document form on 25 February..It recommends that the Board approves it. The Board noted the amendments that had been made and approved it. The document will require considerable revision when Pooling is introduced.
3. Directors queried if the debt collection procedure is in line with approved protocols, eg ensuring that debtors are given 30 days notice to settle their debt and if we warn that court action will incur  extra costs and affect debtors credit rating.  MH stated that debt collection rarely gets to that stage of the process but that he would ensure that wording reflects this.
4. The Board approved the set up of a Paypal business account. This will be useful for schools and parents.
5. It was noted that management accounts are put on TG for all of the Board to access every month. In addition the Finance Committee review them monthly and send any questions or queries to MH.
6. The management accounts for February 2021 were noted.
7. MH will run a training session for directors on understanding financial accounts in the Pentecost or Advent term.
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| **ACTION** | Ensure that debt procedures reflect 30 day notice and warn of additional charges and affect on credit rating. MHMH to run training session for directors on understanding finance. |
| **DECISION** | Approved SRMA form for submission.Approved Finance Procedures and Policies.Set up Paypal business account. |
| **CHALLENGE** | **Is the debt collection procedure in line with approved protocols, eg ensuring that debtors are given 30 days notice to settle their debt? Do we warn that court action will incur extra costs and affect debtors credit rating?** |
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| **Agenda Item 13** | **Performance and Standards** |
| **MINUTE** |  MF gave a presentation on the Leicestershire and Rutland Teaching School Hub.1. The CMAT ( through Christ The King school)  has been accepted to be a Teaching School  Hub. These hubs, 87 of them nationwide, will replace the previous 750 teaching schools. The hub will serve a wide area of Leicestershire and Rutland.
2. It will concentrate on initial teacher training and teacher development and will be at the forefront of delivering the Early Career Framework. NQT's and RQT's will be replaced with a two year programme (ECF). This is designed to improve retention of staff in the profession. It will deliver National Professional Qualifications and Leadership training and CPD for all staff.
3. The hub will serve 209 schools in the region, delivering CPD and teacher support and will roll out from September 2021.
4. Delivery will be done in conjunction with a number of partnership organisations.
5. The hub is looking at delivering a complimentary route alongside the ECF, tailored for Catholic Education.
6. The Hub has been awarded £170k per annum for three years, plus an additional £80k to facilitate start up. The hub will remain small but will deliver through partners. The staffing structure will be covered within the funding. The aim is to breakeven over the three years. The funding will not go into a separate bank account but The Hub  will be split out in the management accounts. A year one forecast is currently being prepared.
7. The partners reflect different phases, eg Primary, Secondary, Nurseries, Special schools, Specialist advise can therefore be sought where needed. The Hub will be a centre for excellence with CTK at the centre of it.
8. The Director of the Teaching School will be accountable to MF. Strategic and operational structures are currently being formed. Accountbility will relate to delivery of programmes by partners. Resonable targets need to be established for the ECF.
9. MF has presented the Hub to Chairs and will continue to explain how it works to schools.
10. The Hub is a considerable achievement for STA CMAT, making it a highly visible member of the educational environment and enhancing its reputation. It gives us an opportunity to shape the educational landscape.
11. The Board congratulated all of the team involved in securing The Hub.

RH gave an update on schools reopening.Students are now all back in school. Secondary schools are undertaking C19 testing and this is proving to be successful.Pupils have generally settled well and this time there does not appear to be big gaps in the curriculum. This is because  more and better remote learning was provided during lockdown, including live teaching by Zoom, following the curriculum and monitoring engagement closely.Pupils are currently being assessed. Gaps will be identified and the priority will be to fill in these gaps. Pupils are happy to be back in school.Covid Funding has been spent well and lessons will be learned for how to use PP funding in the future. 15 schools are using academic mentoring scheme and some are using the national tuition scheme. Smaller levels of catch up funding will be available next year. Pupils that have been impacted socially, emotionally or mentally have been identified and support mechanisms have been put in place.Qualifications 2020-21RH gave an update on how qualifications will be calculated this year. Her full report is on TG.CR and RH had discussed this issue in detail. RH has presented to school leaders about the subject.This year grades will be based on teachers assessing where pupils actually are rather than on a prediction. They will be based on actual assessments. Work is ongoing across the CMAT with assessment groups looking at how assessments will be run.There is clear messaging to parents and schools have shared details of assessments with students so they know when and how they will be assessed. Consistency and evidence is paramount in assessing grades.Final details about grading and appeals process is awaited.Staff are confident about undertaking the assessments but there is some anxiety about awarding grades, especially as details of how this will be done is not yet available.  The CMAT will continue to support staff. Networks are forming and staff and schools will work together to undertake moderation. Some schools may need to moderate outside of the CMAT as they use a different exam board. It was noted that throughout the pandemic, the uncertainty surrounding education has lead to much anxiety amongst staff and confidence in the DfE has eroded significantly.Chairs have received the presentations on qualifications.The Board thanked MF and RH for all of their hard work on providing guidance and support for the schools. |
| **CHALLENGE** | **How do the finances work? Is it kept in a separate account? See 6How will the Hub work with partners? see 7What are the lines of accountability? See 8** |
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| **Agenda Item 14** | **Policies** |
| **MINUTE** |  1. Equality Policy. A statement about perceptive discrimination should be added. Page 3 should refer to Chair of the LGB not Chair of Governors. Subject to these amendments the policy was approved.
2. Health and Safety Policy. This had been updated to take into account actions identified by the H&S audit. The policy was approved, subject to a typo on Page 12 being rectified (remove additional and).
3. Data Protection Policy. Amended to refer to GDPR UK legislation. Page 12 , point 18 to be amended to remove the reference to the governors induction. Subject to this amendment the policy was approved.
4. Charging and Remissions Policy. This is a new policy, previously schools had their own policies. The policy was approved.
5. Whistleblowing Policy. Change 'Academy Trust' to CMAT. Take out reference to LGB on page 3 if not appropriate. Change number of schools to 21 until Bishop Ellis comes on board. The policy was approved subject to these amendments
6. The business continuity and critical incident plan were reviewed. It was suggested that consideration is given to advising heads about how to deal with the press. The document will be amended and come back to the Board in July
 |
| **ACTION** | Amend Equality Policy. Send final version to Clerk. ABAmend H&S Policy. Send final version to Clerk. ABAmend Data Protection Policy. Send final version to Clerk. ABAmend Whistleblowing Policy. Send final version to Clerk. ABConsider amending business continuity and critical incident plan. Bring back to July Board for approval. AB |
| **DECISION** | Approved Equality Policy , subject to amendment.Approved H&S Policy , subject to amendment.Approved Data Protection Policy , subject to amendment.Approved Charging and Remissions Policy.Approved Ehistleblowing Policy , subject to amendment. |
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| **Agenda Item 15** | **CMAT Risk Register** |
| **MINUTE** |  The Audit and Risk Committee had considered this in detail on February 25th. It is a live document and has been supplied to the Directors by email. It is reviewed and updated termly. Directors should review the updates and monitor progress and look for evidence that actions have been undertaken. |
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| **Agenda Item 16** | **Next Meeting** |
| **MINUTE** |  23/6/21 Additional meeting  -  External Review of Governance 5/7/21The Board thanked all of the Executive team for their hard work.The Chair will be sending a letter to all schools thanking them for all their efforts. |
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| **Agenda Item 17** | **Director Only item** |
| **MINUTE** |  Work on the external review of governance continues. All Directors will be interviewed in June, along with the executive team and a number of heads and chairs.The self review questionairre will need completing again shortly.An action plan has been drawn up and some progress made.The additional board meeting will look at feedback received and a full report will be available for 5 July. |
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| **Agenda Item 18** | **Closing Prayer** |
| **MINUTE** |  The meeting closed with a prayer. |
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| **Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting:** 0 |

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| STA Board   *dated:*  25/03/2021 |
|  Minutes approved by Jennifer Barnacle                                  |

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