

STA Board Minutes 05/07/2021

▶ Virtual ▶ Monday, July 5, 2021 ▶ 4pm ▶ Chair: Sarah Noon ▶ Clerk: Jennifer Barnacle

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

Governors Attending:	>Christopher Reynolds, Paul Chipchase, Sarah Noon, Brian Underwood, Terry Smith, Christopher Reynolds, Mary Mihovilovic, Maria Jane, Phillip Bateman
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Governors Apologies:	>Mary Delahunty
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Non Governors Attending:	>Jennifer Barnacle, Antoinette Bouwens, Neil Lockyer, Tom Shannon, Mary Robson, Ruth Hurcombe, Mike Hobbs, Marcella Gillespie, MArtin Fitzwilliam, Paula Cooper
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Non Governors Apologies:	>
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Agenda Item 1	▶ Opening Prayer
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MINUTE	The meeting started with a prayer. The Chair welcomed MM to her first Board meeting and introductions were made.
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Agenda Item 2	▶ Minutes of Previous meeting and matters arising
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MINUTE	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Matters arising MD to meet with HR re wellbeing. MD had met with MR and will be asked to provide a report at the next HR committee in September. Compare number of safeguarding incidents with similar schools in city. Information will be provided by Local Authority once they have received all annual reports . Report back at Sept Board. MH to run training session for directors on understanding finance. Date to be agreed in Advent term. Consider amending business continuity and critical incident plan. Bring back to July Board for approval. See agenda item 6
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ACTION	MD to provide report on her visit with MR at September committee meeting. MD Compare number of safeguarding incidents with similar schools in city. MG MH to run training session for directors on understanding finance. Date to be agreed in Advent term.
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Agenda Item 3	▶ Declarations of business interests
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MINUTE	There were no declarations of interest for the purpose of this meeting.
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Agenda Item 4	▶ Legal, Governance and Correspondance
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MINUTE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The changes to the Admissions code relating to internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC) were noted and the variations were determined. JB to inform the Diocese and AB to put revised policies on websites. 2. The final report on external governance has been circulated to directors and is on TG. An action plan is included which includes some suggestions for the Board to consider. NL and SN will meet shortly to review the action plan and update on areas that have already been actioned. Directors will be asked for their views over the summer holidays. The Chair thanked all of the directors and members of the team for their input. 3. Committee membership 2021-22: <div style="text-align: right;">Standards - BU (chair), MJ, SN, CR</div> <div style="text-align: left;">HR - MD (Chair). TS. SN. BU</div>
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	<p style="text-align: right;">Finance and Estates - PB (Chair), SN, TS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Audit and Risk - TS (Chair), BU, SN</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Catholic Life - PC (Chair), SN, PB, MJ</p> <p>4. It was agreed that MM will consider which committees she would like to sit on after the Committee meetings in September.</p>
ACTION	JB to inform the Diocese that admissions variations determined and AB to put revised policies on websites. MM will consider which committees she would like to sit on after the Committee meetings in September.
DECISION	Determined the variations to Admissions Code. Committee membership 2021-22: Standards - BU (chair), MJ, SN, CR HR - MD (Chair), TS, SN, BU Finance and Estates - PB (Chair), SN, TS Audit and Risk - TS (Chair), BU, SN Catholic Life - PC (Chair), SN, PB, MJ
Agenda Item 5	▶ Approval of budget and financial elements
MINUTE	<p>The Finance report was noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The staff expenses policy has been amended to reflect benefits being introduced by the benefits package and to clarify position on working lunches. The policy was approved and will be put in place from 1/9/21. There are few breaches of the policy and internal auditors are content with how it is followed. 2. The Board noted the related party transactions which relate predominantly to the Diocese, members and NRCDES Youth services. The Board approved the two procurement exemptions as set out in the Finance report relating to the youth services and to the bookshop. The Board agree to the related party transactions listed in Annex 2, and agree that the conditions outlined in paragraph 3.6 have been met for each transaction. It would be very difficult to compare services and value for money as Dioceses will offer different provisions and you would not be comparing like with like. We also have established links with the Diocese and the provision we get, especially for youth services, is very good. 3. The GAG appeals process (annex 3) was noted and it was suggested that timelines are added and clarification is needed about when appeals move between stages. It will be brought back to the September Board for approval . 4. The management accounts are reviewed monthly by members of the finance committee and comments recorded. They are available on TG for all directors to note. There are a number of strategies and options being considered in order to address high staffing costs. It would be preferable to have high quality and well trained TA's in place to work with SEN pupils and this would be aligned with class teaching. TA's are being increasingly trained in delivering high quality targeted interventions. EHCP funding will continue to be spent on providing good quality provision and on removing barriers to learning. In some schools the pupil/teacher ratio is low and this can contribute to high staff costs. 5. The budget had been reviewed by the finance committee and they recommend to the Board that it is approved. The minutes of the finance committee meeting are available on TG for review by all directors if required. MH detailed a small amendment to the budget presented which relate to a misanalysis of depreciation. It has no overall effect on budget and affects lines 717 and 715 . The Board approved the budget for submission.
ACTION	Amend GAG pooling appeal policy and bring back to Board in Sept. MH
DECISION	Approve updated staff expenses policy. The Board approved the two procurement exemptions as set out in the Finance report relating to the youth services and to the bookshop. The Board agree to the related party transactions listed in Annex 2, and that the conditions outlined in paragraph 3.6 have been met for each transaction. Budget approved.
CHALLENGE	<p>Do most schools adhere fully to the expenses policy ? See 1</p> <p>Can we compare Diocesan services with other Dioceses to ensure VFM? See 2</p> <p>What is being done to address high staffing costs? IS the reference to using support staff for SEND provision the correct approach? See 4</p>
Agenda Item 6	▶ Business Services Report

MINUTE	<p>The report was noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schools continue to be impacted by C19 and there are currently 44 pupils with C19 and 724 pupils self isolating. 2. The Board approved the Fire Alarm Upgrades at Christ the King, Holy Cross Whitwick and St Clares. Estimated cost is £117k and they have been approved by the Diocese and costs met by the SCA funding. The work had been identified as necessary by fire risk assessment audits. Existing systems are working and are maintained and are not a safety concern but have been identified as needing upgrading. No other issues were identified by the fire audits that require immediate attention. 3. Some changes have been made to the business continuity plan. Directors to review document and send any comments to AB . Document to come to Sept board to be ratified . 4. The EVERY portal is showing an improvement in H & S compliance - now only 18% is classed as RED issues across all schools. It is not any particular area of non-compliance but is a combination of things including staff getting used to systems and having documentation in place. Some schools are extremely good but there are a number where headway is not being made quickly enough and a number of priority areas have been identified that are not being addressed by schools/CMAT. Additional support is being offered to these school and the CMAT is reviewing its own compliance record. 5. Natasha's Law is being introduced in October 2021 and relates to the labelling of food. The CMAT is receiving assistance in implementing it from an experienced catering manager.
ACTION	Directors to review Business continuity document and send any comments to AB . Document to come to Sept board to be ratified .
DECISION	The Board approved the Fire Alarm Upgrades at Christ the King, Holy Cross Whitwick and St Clares.
CHALLENGE	<p>Are the existing fire alarm systems at the schools safe? Did the fire audits indicate any other areas that need addressing as a priority? See 2</p> <p>Are there any particular areas of non compliance in respect of health and safety as indicated by the EVERY portal? See 4</p>
Agenda Item 7	▶ Lead Lay Chaplains Report
MINUTE	<p>TS presented his report and it was noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Eco Roadmap launch and training events have been held and schools are well engaged. 2. DL has appointed a Lay Chaplain, Charles Archer. He will eventually also offer support to Sacred Heart Loughborough and St Marys. 3. The CMAT will be interviewing for a Lay Chaplain to work across 5 Primary Schools. 4. Let Us Pray was launched on 30 June. Almost all of the schools in the CMAT have ordered the programme resources. 5. The Priority schools were noted. In some schools there is a lack of chaplaincy provision and this is slowing progress being made. Schools are wanting to progress but have a lack of resource, chaplain provision and /or additional priority areas. The LLC supports as much as possible and works with headteachers and the appointment of Lay Chaplains will help. In some schools there has been difficulty in getting schools to agree what the priorities should be. 6. The CMAT along with the other three CMATs has been trying to recruit 2 chaplaincy apprentices. There were 4 applications but none were in Leicestershire and travel /accomodation will be an issue. The provision of Diocesan subsidised accomodation was discussed and PC advised TS to ensure that the correct processes are followed and suggested that he contacts the Property Department of the Diocese for assistance and guidance. 7. The external governance review had praised the role of the LLC and it was recognised as a strength of the governance structure. 8. Next year members of the Catholic Life Committee will be arranging to visit schools to look at the Eco Roadmap.
ACTION	Next year members of the Catholic Life Committee will be arranging to visit school to look at provision. TS to approach property department of Diocese re accommodation needs. TS
CHALLENGE	Why is progress in respect of Collective Worship and Catholic Life slow in some schools? How can they be supported? See 5

Agenda Item 8	 Safeguarding Report
MINUTE	<p>MG presented her report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ofsted have highlighted a 'normalised' culture of sexual assault and harassment in schools in the UK. They have made a number of recommendations and the importance of staff training was noted. Government funding will be available for training. Until this is in place MG will undertake training in schools. It is vital that staff are well trained and confident in dealing with any accusations. Schools are awaiting updated KCSIE guidance. The long term impact of this behaviour on pupils was noted. 2. The external governance review had highlighted the importance of the safeguarding director role for the schools in the CMAT. 3. Safeguarding training will be undertaken for the Directors next term.
4.	
Agenda Item 9	 HR report and benefits plan
MINUTE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MR presented the HR report. A staff survey across all 4 CMATs has been carried out and a report will come to the next HR committee. It will allow benchmarking to be undertaken across the CMATs. 2. Policy development continues. The Mental health and wellbeing of staff policy and the Recruitment and Selection policy were approved. The Support staff pay policy, Annual leave policy, Absence Policy and the Maternity and Parental leave were deferred to the September meeting. 3. NL outlined the benefits package that will be introduced to all staff from 1 September (Medicash). It will replace the Employee assistance scheme that is currently offered to staff. It includes good cash benefits for health services, unlimited access to a virtual GP, a 24/7 helpline and discounts. There are options to add partners for an additional fee. It will run as a pilot scheme for one year and its use will be monitored.
ACTION	The Support staff pay policy, Annual leave policy, Absence Policy and the Maternity and Parental leave were deferred to the September meeting.
DECISION	The Mental health and wellbeing of staff policy and the Recruitment and Selection policy were approved.
Agenda Item 10	 CMAT Annual Report
MINUTE	<p>NL presented the Annual report. This is the first draft of a report that will go to members in December. It includes a section on C19 and its implications, core business and essential subsidiary business.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. C19 and lockdown had had a major impact on the social and mental wellbeing of pupils and this was greater than the educational impact. Good online provision for pupils had ensured that academic gaps were not as high as had been anticipated. There has been a increase in the number of domestic violence reports that have come from Encompass (where police have been involved) and also in the number of pupils expressing suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide. The CMAT have supported schools in dealing with these issues with input from the Safeguarding Director and the Educational Psychologist. Staff have been well trained and staff in school have done a very good job in respect of safeguarding in challenging circumstances. 2. Overall parents have been happy with remote learning provision and resources. Gap analysis was undertaken when pupils returned to school and the impact was not as bad as anticipated due to the quality of the online provision. However, when pupils didn't engage there had been a major impact. Funding is in place next year to allow a focus on those pupils who need it. 3. External assessments at KS2, 4 and 5 were cancelled this year. A robust teacher assessed grading system was put in place and was welcomed by the schools. 4. Staff had felt reassured by risk assessments that had been put in place in respect of C19 and how they had been updated to follow latest guidance. The CMAT inset day in January had focused on staff wellbeing and spiritual nourishment. The next steps for staff wellbeing have been identified and some of the good practices implemented during C19 will remain in place. 5. The demands on the Educational Psychologist have changed this year due to C19. There have been significant restrictions due to C19 which have limited the amount of staff training this year. but there will

	<p>be more of this next year. C19 increased his workload and young people are likely to be affected for some time. He had been assisting the SEND network and training staff and had run a session for TA's across the Diocese.</p> <p>6. The rating of payroll reflects the timing of the survey, historic issues and the length of time some issues have taken to resolve. A new payroll manager is in place across all 4 CMATs and there are now less complaints. The executive team are confident that the next survey will present an improved picture.</p>
CHALLENGE	<p>Does the Educational Psychologist have enough capacity? See 5 Why do 40% of staff rate payroll as ineffective? See 6</p>
Agenda Item 11	<p>► 'RED' schools update</p>
MINUTE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Much work has been undertaken on assessments and identifying gaps. Generally younger children have made less progress and disadvantaged pupils have also been affected more. Targetted interventions must be in place for these pupils. 2. Writing in-year progress is good but progress over time (years 2-6) is slower. 3. There are a number of primary schools identified as 'RED' schools and these were reviewed. There is a variety of support in place for these schools, including support from school improvement heads and the DPS, school improvement plans and appraisal processes. Progress is being monitored closely and discussed at the Curriculum and Standards committee. 4. The AMBER secondary schools were noted along with the actions that have been taken to improve areas. 5. An update on the summer priorities for secondary schools was given. Teacher Assessed grades have been submitted and pupils have been given an update on the appeals process. There are likely to be some changes to the curriculum needed next year but details are not yet available. CR stated that the workload on schools in respect of appeals will be immense and it was vital that schools carefully log the appeal process they follow. The process followed in ascertaining TAG's has also been carefully documented. 6. It was noted that when secondary schools return in September their workload will be impacted by the appeals process, the transition of the year 7 pupils and by C19 testing of pupils.
7.	
Agenda Item 12	<p>► Marketing Proposal</p>
MINUTE	<p>NL presented a marketing proposal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improvement of communication and marketing needs to be considered at school and/or CMAT level to address issues of falling pupil numbers and numbers of Catholics on roll. 2. Across the CMAT, there are 146 pupils less than PAN. This amounts to lost income of £300,000. All 4 secondary schools are oversubscribed . In respect of the incoming year 7, English Martyrs has 179 out of 180 pupils practising Catholics, St Martins has around 20%, De Lisle 33% and St Pauls around 50%. Transportation issues in respect of secondary schools needs to be reviewed. 3. Consideration could be given to a move away from individual school marketing to a CMAT approach focusing on all the strengths of the CMAT including the teaching school hub and exemplary leadership programme. 4. Consideration could be given to employing a communication and marketing officer or an external consultancy agency to assist with marketing. It was agreed that any external consultants must have an understanding of, and a sympathy with, the Catholic ethos of the schools. Two of the other Trusts have employed marketing and communication officers and it was noted that there were advantages and disadvantages to both employing somebody and to using an external consultant. The costs and benefits of both should be considered and compared to lost income. 5. The Board agreed that NL should investigate the proposal further and come back to the Board in September with a costed recommendation.
ACTION	<p>The Board agreed that NL should investigate the proposal further and come back to the Board in September with a costed recommendation.</p>

Agenda Item 13	▶ 2021-22 Meeting dates
MINUTE	<p>The dates of next years meetings were approved.</p> <p>Board (all at 4pm unless stated) 9/9/21 inc comms (9.30am) 13/12/21 24/3/22 4/7/22</p> <p>A &R Comm (4pm) 25/11/21 24/2/22 18/5/22</p> <p>Catholic Life Comm (2.30pm) 25/01/22 25/04/22</p> <p>HR/Standards/Finance Comms (9.30am/2pm/4pm) 26/01/22 26/04/22 16/06/22 Finance only</p>

Agenda Item 14	▶ LGB Chair nominations for approval
MINUTE	<p>The Chair and Vice Chair nominations from the LGB's for 2021-22 were noted and all approved.</p> <p>A number of experienced chairs have reached the end of their terms this year and have stood down. Some governing bodies have been unable to nominate a chair, as none of the other foundation governors have been willing or able to step into the post. SN, NL and JB have been offering support and guidance to these schools, including talking to the governors, arranging other chairs to talk to them and offering training if required. It is hoped that all schools will have a Chair (or acting chair) in place for the first meeting of the year.</p>
DECISION	Approved Chair and Vice Chair nominations for the year.

Agenda Item 15	▶ Any Other Business
MINUTE	<p>The Chair thanked all of the executive team for their work in what has been a very challenging year for staff and for schools. She thanked the Trust Board and the Clerk for their input and contribution throughout the year.</p> <p>The meeting closed with a prayer.</p>

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

STA Board *dated:* 05/07/2021
Minutes approved by Jennifer Barnacle