



## **Whinless Down Academy Trust**

### **Board Meeting**

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Anne Siggins

#### **Minutes of the Trust Board Meeting**

**Held at the Hub. Priory Fields School, at 4pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023.**

**Board Trustees Present:** Anne Siggins (EHT), Alison Mackintosh (Chair), Tricia Sherling (Vice Chair)  
Mike Ashley, Pam Brivio

**Others Present:** Michelle Noden (Trust Business Manager), Kelly Brown (Priory Fields Headteacher), Anthony Welch (Member)

**Governance Professional:** Claudia Sawyers

<b>1</b>	<b><u>Welcome, Introduction and Apologies</u></b> All Trustees were welcomed to the meeting. There are no resignations to report. There were no apologies and no absent trustees.	<b><u>Actions</u></b>
<b>2</b> <b>2.1</b>	<b><u>Minutes from Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023</u></b> <b><u>Approval of Minutes</u></b> Previous minutes were made available to Trustees via email prior to the meeting. Trustees agreed the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting and minutes were signed by chair.  <b><u>Matters Arising</u></b> Skills Audits have now all been returned to Gov. Prof. to collate responses which can be discussed at the next meeting.	
<b>3</b>	<b><u>Publication of Minutes</u></b> The Governance Professional confirmed the approved minutes from the Trust Board meeting held on 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 have been published on the Trust website.	
<b>4</b>	<b><u>Register of Business and Pecuniary Interests</u></b> Trustees were given the opportunity to declare any new business interests, there were no required updates to Interest forms. There were no interests declared against this agenda.	

<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>5.1</b></p>	<p><b><u>CEO Report</u></b></p> <p>The CEO report was made available prior to the meeting. A trustee highlighted that the roll number for September 2023 is low; it was commented that this appears to be a low birth rate year group as this is a reduction in each school in the Trust and reported more widely across the surrounding area. This will have an impact on the budget for the 2024-2025 academic year and a trustee asked what measures will need to be considered to ensure the schools can be sustained; mixed year groups may need to be considered but this would not be the favourable option.</p> <p><b><u>Data Outcomes</u></b></p> <p>The data for Key Stage 2 SATs was circulated at the meeting as it had not been released at the time of agenda setting. Priory Fields and St Martin's has seen an improvement in results with combined results at 51% and 64% respectively, however Vale View has not seen an improvement at 30% combined. The national average was 59%. There are appeals at Priory Fields which would bring the combined to 53% if successful, and appeals at Vale View would bring the combined to 37% if successful.</p> <p>A trustee asked whether the results are as expected/targeted. The results are in line or better at Priory Fields and St Martin's, however Vale View had expected approximately 50%. At Vale View, there are high levels of SEN in the cohort and some new arrivals to the year group.</p> <p>A date has been booked in for each Headteacher to go over the data with CEO in term 1 and drill down for an in-depth look in to the results, so preparations can be made in good time for the upcoming year 6. Once this has taken place, a meeting with the Standards trustee can be set to review.</p> <p>Year 1 Phonics data was shared, it was commented that at PF, this specific cohort has high levels of challenge and there has been an impact to results as they are lower than previous year, however is in line with the GLD from their Early Years data. The challenge is significant SEMH needs and high SEN, it was noted that this cohort had been significantly impacted by the pandemic in their early education/nursery years with lower levels of socialisation. There are plans in place for this cohort in year 2, with some outreach work from the Aspen unit.</p> <p>Key Stage 1 data does see an improvement this year in Reading, Writing and Maths for Priory Fields and for Reading at St Martin's, with Writing and Maths very slightly lower than last year. Vale View was slightly lower in all areas.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>6.1</b></p>	<p><b><u>FSARC Update</u></b></p> <p>FSARC chair gave a verbal update to the Trust Board. Budget monitoring has taken place for April and May, with small variances between the two months. There was a discussion at the meeting regarding different models of pay range for support staff and the committee agreed that it would be prudent for some further research in to the financial implications and potential comparisons to other Trust models.</p> <p>There has been an announcement from the Government that teachers will be given a 6.5% pay rise, 3.5% had already been incorporated in to school budgets and the additional 3% will be DfE funded, however it has not yet been determined how this will be allocated to schools.</p>	

	<p>Risk Management was reviewed and the risk register was updated for the summer term. There are some estates risks that remain an high priority, such as the mobile unit at Vale View and the roof in the hall at St Martin's. It is unlikely that another CIF bid would be successful. A DfE loan could be explored, to look for a permanent solution for the classroom.</p>	
7	<p><b><u>Budget Approval</u></b></p> <p>Budgets were made available to the Trust Board prior to the meeting. Budgets were reviewed by the FSARC committee and have recommended them for Trust Board agreement. It was noted that the rollover each year for St Martin's is low. This will be closely monitored regularly and if necessary, staffing structure changes may need to be considered. The Trust Board acknowledged the submission of the Budget Forecast Return and agrees the school/trust budgets.</p>	
8	<p><b><u>Going Concern</u></b></p> <p>TBM has updated the assessment and there is one area which has not been marked as a 'yes', which is that the Trust Board do not regularly review integrated curriculum financial planning ratios. This is something that the Trust may consider using as it helps review where savings can be made and to make budgets more sustainable. It is felt that the Trust does work well within budgets and value for money can be demonstrated. The Trust Board does consider WDAT to be a 'going concern' and financially sustainable in the long term.</p>	
9	<p><b><u>Skills Audit</u></b></p> <p>As of today, the skills audits have been returned to Gov. Prof. so responses can be collated and analysed. Gov. Prof. will look for gaps and discuss training needs with trustees.</p>	
10 10.1	<p><b><u>NGA Training</u></b></p> <p>At the last meeting, Trustees were asked to complete the NGA Learning Link modules of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. There were some issues accessing the platform, Gov Prof. will communicate separately with individuals to help access the platform before the next meeting.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Standards Monitoring Visit</u></b></p> <p>TS and HS visited the schools individually on monitoring days and the feedback was generally similar at each school, addressing development in marking, modelling and adaptive teaching for SEN. Some further monitoring has taken place as TS has attended school review days which will be formalised in writing and fed back to the Trust Board.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Growth Plan</u></b></p> <p>CEO has been working on the Growth Strategy document which was shared with the Trust Board. The aim for the Trust has been to grow through other local schools and this is still the favoured approach. Another option is to join with another already-established Trust, however it was agreed that this would not be the favoured option. Trustees agreed that now is a good time to write to local schools to open up the conversation.</p>	

	<p><b><u>Finalised Staffing Structures</u></b></p> <p>Finalised staffing structures were distributed to the Trust Board prior to the meeting, there have been no changes since the provisional structures were reviewed at the last meeting and these have been approved.</p>	
<p><b>11</b></p> <p><b>11.1</b></p>	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Recruitment Policy</u></b></p> <p>The Recruitment Policy has been updated in line with the HR Connect model policy. There are several updates to the policy, the main being the inclusion of online searches of candidates. There are some guidance notes to accompany the policy and these will be looked at further to establish a system or guide for conducting the searches. The Trust board agreed the policy.</p>	
	<p><b><u>Academy Trust Handbook 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Academy Trust Handbook 2023 has been released and the Trust's finance regulations policy will be updated to reflect new guidance. A summary of changes collated by NGA was distributed to the Board for an overview of the changes.</p>	
	<p><b><u>LGB Meeting Minutes</u></b></p> <p>Minutes of the LGB meetings were distributed to the board for information purposes. It was noticed that in the Priory Fields School LGB meeting, there was a discussion in term 4 regarding the implementation of a second assistant Headteacher and the minutes state this is aided by Pupil Premium funding and it was noted that this is not entirely accurate. This will be clarified as a point under matters arising at the next PF LGB meeting.</p>	
<b>12</b>	<p><b><u>Safeguarding Update</u></b></p> <p>CEO has updated the actions for the summer term; a trustee commented that a continuously updated document has been useful in ensuring trustees are well informed of safeguarding measures and effectiveness and all trustees agreed.</p> <p>Safer recruitment training has been undertaken by additional staff members, such as those who handle papers during the recruitment process and those who support in other aspects such as observations and tasks. A register of those who have been trained and when will be devised and AM needs refresher training.</p> <p><b><u>Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023</u></b></p> <p>The new guidance for KCSIE has been released and the safeguarding policy will be updated to reflect this. Main changes to the guidance were discussed and a copy of the guidance and policy will be given to trustees in term 1. Annual training will also be required.</p>	
<b>13</b>	<p><b><u>GDPR Update</u></b></p> <p>No updates – no breaches.</p>	
<b>14</b>	<p><b><u>Confidentiality of Proceedings</u></b></p> <p>15. AOB</p>	
<b>15</b>	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p>	

	CEO and PF HT left the room 18:10. See confidential Minutes	
	<b>Dates</b> Proposed meeting dates for the Academic Year 2023-2024 have been distributed and agreed.	

<u>Action Points</u>

Minutes taken by Governance Professional Claudia Sawyers

Signed by Chair of Whinless Down Academy Trust: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alison Mackintosh