



Whinless Down Academy Trust

Board Meeting

Tuesday 16th July 2024

CEO: Miss Kelly Brown

Minutes of the Trust Board Meeting

Held at Trust Office at St Martin's School at 4pm on Tuesday 16th July 2024.

Board Trustees Present: Tricia Sherling (vice chair), Sandie Butcher, Anne Siggins, Kelly Brown

Others Present: Michelle Noden (Trust Business Manager), Anthony Welch (Member),
Carol Rayfield (Member)

Governance Professional: Claudia Sawyers

1	<u>Welcome, Introduction and Apologies</u> Vice chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies Apologies were received and accepted from Alison Mackintosh and Pam Brivio. Resignations None	<u>Actions</u>
2 2.1	<u>Minutes from Meeting</u> Approval of Minutes The minutes for the meeting held on 24th May 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were not signed by the vice chair as she was not present at the last meeting, so will be signed by the chair at the next available opportunity. Matters Arising The consultation for changing the hours of the school day has concluded. The consultation ran from 7 th June 2024 to 5 th July 2024. There were a total of 6 responses, which mainly included questions relating to arrangements for personal circumstances. The Trust Board supported the change to commence in September 2024.	

	<p>achievement across Key Stage 2 needs to improve and it cannot be left until year 6 to try and manage as many interventions as possible.</p> <p>A trustee asked whether venn diagrams are used to analyse where individual children need to improve to achieve combined and suggested this as an area that could be looked at by the standards committee for the whole on key stage 2 so this is a focus more early on and could help to improve combined scores over a sustained period of time going forward.</p> <p>It was discussed that several other factors may have contributed, such as the reduction in monitoring and quality of teaching over time not being good enough. CEO is already aware that the key focus needs to be on improving outcomes and it will be the top priority going forward. The other priorities may need to be slimmed down in order to focus on this.</p> <p>A trustee asked what support can be offered from trustees and governors. CEO felt that the monitoring by TS of target children at VV this year was effective and this could be extended. CEO feels that support from trustees in managing poor performance and increasing monitoring would be beneficial and trustees agreed that a rigorous monitoring schedule is necessary.</p> <p><u>Phonics</u></p> <p>CEO commented that all schools have seen an increase in year 2 pass rate and particularly at PF this is a real achievement given the cohort. This year, a real effort has been made to stick to Little Wandle scheduling and results have been better.</p> <p><u>EYFS</u></p> <p>There has been involvement from Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) in Vale View EYFS, as a ‘team around class’ approach has been needed due to high level of SEN, therefore GLD has been affected.</p>	
<p>6 6.1</p>	<p><u>FSARC Update</u></p> <p>The FSARC committee met last week to monitor May management accounts and reviewed the proposed budgets.</p> <p>There was a decrease in rollover at Priory Fields, stability in the St Martin’s rollover and an increase in rollover at Vale View. Variances were not of any concern. There was discussion regarding Vale View nursery and this has been added to the risk register to be monitored closely because of fears of the main school budget supporting the nursery. However the need for the nursery was still highlighted and the benefits that the nursery brings to all schools within the trust.</p> <p>At the meeting, an update was given by TBM on CIF works and TBM is meeting contractors next week for the schedule of works being completed in the summer at St Martin’s to repair the roof. Vale View are still waiting on a ‘letter of intention’ from the contractor in order to put in the planning application for the replacement mobile unit, which is hoped to be installed in the Easter holiday 2025.</p>	

	<p><u>Internal Audit</u></p> <p>The internal audit was completed with once again a very good result, there were only two 'light green' RAG rated recommendations to improve. They were as follows:</p> <p>The first being that a clear audit trail is needed for income received, as currently cumulated income from School Comms is posted at the end of the month rather than as and when income is received in the bank account (several times per month). The will be carried out moving forward.</p> <p>The second is that lettings rates are not currently agreed annually and minuted. TBM commented that the Lettings Policy is agreed, however the hourly rate charged is not reviewed and stated. The committee discussed the cost of lettings; currently the only lettings that take place are at Vale View, which has been the case since before Vale View joined WDAT 6 years ago. In this time, the cost of lettings has been £10 an hour. The committee agreed that this is too low and hire costs of spaces locally can exceed 4 times this figure. It was agreed that £20 an hour would still be competitive and represent good value. The rate was agreed at £20 per hour.</p>	
7	<p><u>Budget Approval</u></p> <p>The three year budget forecasts have been sent to the committee prior to the meeting. Each school is forecasting an in-year deficit in at least year 1, with St Martin's and Vale View forecasting in-year deficit also in year 2 with rollovers also being used and very little carry forward. Staffing levels in each budget year were also proposed and included for information. Trust Board agreed the three year budget forecasts and acknowledge challenges, especially with regards to staffing levels as discussed earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>Trust Board agreed the Budget Forecast Return to be submitted to DfE.</p>	
8	<p><u>Standards Monitoring</u></p> <p>The standards committee attended school reviews recently and the report was sent to the Trust Board prior to the meeting. The committee felt it was a thorough process to discuss with headteachers and leadership to review the year and aims for next.</p> <p>All schools found Little Wandle strengthened phonics this year and Early Years used 'Drawing Club' programme to improve early writing. Writing across the school is a focus for next year. Staffing challenges have impacted each school this year and where appropriate this is being managed and is currently looking more positive for the new academic year. Overall the school reviews felt like a robust process and the committee felt it as positive to hear honest conversations about areas of concern. CEO also reported that Headteachers thanked the committee and felt the process was useful.</p>	
9	<p><u>MAT Plan Review</u></p> <p>Summer term review has been updated on the plan and sent to the Trust Board prior to the meeting. Many of the areas updated have already been discussed earlier in the meeting, such as outcomes, estates work, finances and staffing.</p> <p>CEO is looking to slim down the MAT plan going forward and hopes to gain knowledge from KMA colleagues about how they set out their plan. In the next academic year, there needs to</p>	

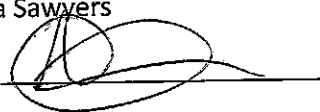
	<p>be a key focus on improving outcomes and other areas previously identified may not be a priority this year. CEO acknowledged some areas of the plan for this year are not as far forward as initially hoped, however spending a great deal of time at Priory Fields has had an impact on her time this year.</p> <p>CEO would like to ensure that guidance and training on adult mental health support is put in place, to ensure it is clear to all where responsibilities lie and what processes should look like as well as what support is available.</p>	
<p>10 10.1</p>	<p><u>Going Concern</u></p> <p>TBM has updated the assessment and there as one point that was questioned by a trustee as to what the meaning is 'Do the board monitor liquidity KPIs such as current assets to current liabilities ratio'. TBM clarified that within the management account, the cash the trust has 'in hand' should be enough to cover creditors.</p> <p>The Trust Board does consider WDAT to be a 'going concern' and financially sustainable in the long term.</p>	
<p>11 11.1</p>	<p><u>Skills Audit</u></p> <p>A skills audit is due to take place, however Gov. Prof. has done some research in to models on NGA and there is a group skills audit available on Learning Link, which was discussed and may be more beneficial to encourage discussion amongst the board, rather than completing individual forms. A trustee commented this could be a good tool to review at an AGM.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p><u>Finalised Staffing Structure</u></p> <p>Finalised staffing structures were distributed to the Trust Board prior to the meeting, there has been two minor changes since the provisional structures were reviewed at the last meeting at Priory Fields. They are that a flexible working request was submitted and approved and the promotion of a TA to HLTA (both due to take place from September).</p> <p>Trust Board agreed finalised staffing structures.</p>	
	<p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>The safeguarding update report was tabled. The ongoing log of actions and following up on previous items was updated by CEO.</p>	
	<p><u>Minutes from LGBs</u></p> <p>Minutes of the LGB meetings were distributed to the board for information purposes. There were no comments.</p>	
	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <p>Managing Absence and Ill Health Policy Special Leave Policy</p> <p>Both of the policies had been agreed at the last Trust Board meeting and HRConnect advised to consult with staff regarding the updates. All staff members received the updates in a presentation format in staff meetings that they have attended in their respective teams. The presentation highlighted the type of leave available to staff and an overview of types of leave is included at the end of the policy for quick access. It has been agreed amongst headteachers</p>	

	that leave requests will need to come to them for approval, as there needs to be a fair approach to requests, previously requests went to line managers and was difficult to manage. Now consultation has finished, the policies will be made final and Trust Board agreed this.	
13	GDPR Update There have been two breaches at Vale View, which had been identified internally and related to photo permission errors. TBM referred the breach to ICO and they advised that the internal process undertaken to rectify the concern was the correct course of action and no further action needed. TBM asked school offices to review all permission forms to ensure the spreadsheet given to class teachers was correct.	
14	Confidentiality of Proceedings Item 4.3 and item 15.2 – see confidential minutes.	
15	AOB	
15.1	TBM confirmed that the recommendation of external accountants has been approved by all Members.	
15.2	See confidential minutes.	

Action Points

Minutes taken by Governance Professional Claudia Sawyers

Signed by Chair of Whinless Down Academy Trust:
Alison Mackintosh



Date: 22/10/24