

East Midlands Academy Trust Full Board Meeting

Thursday 4 May 2023 at 6.00pm
Pyramus House, Roman Way, Grange Park, Northampton, NN4 5EA

AGENDA

These minutes reflect the order of the discussion, not necessarily the order of the agenda

Attendance		
Role	Name	Present
Trustee	Kevin Crompton (Chair) ☎	P
Trustee	Kate Whittlesey ☎	P
Trustee	Nick Bell	P
Trustee	Leigh Jones	P
Trustee	Ayo Salam	P
Trustee	Stephen Morales	P
Trustee	Fiona Wheeler	P
Trustee	Martin Conlon	P
	In Attendance	
Chief Executive Officer	Joshua Coleman	P
Chief Finance Officer	Paul Wheeler	P
Director of Education	John Lawson	P
Governance Professional	Juliette Pierson	P
P=Present A=Apologies x = Absent		

Agenda item	Discussion	Action
1. Welcome and introductions	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded all that the matters discussed during the meeting should remain confidential until such time as the minutes were approved. All welcomed Kate Whittlesey to the meeting.	
2. Apologies	No apologies for the meeting were advised in advance of the meeting.	
3. Quorum	The Governance Professional advised that the meeting was quorate.	
4. Declarations of interest	There were no declarations of interest pertaining to this agenda that had not already been declared on the Register of Interests.	
5. Minutes of Trust Board Meeting on the 16.12.2022, & matters arising not appearing on the Action Log	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 16.12.2022 had been distributed with the agenda and papers for the meeting and were agreed by all present to be a true representation of the meeting that took place, once two small grammatical errors on items 11 and 12 were corrected (one a grammatical error and the year changed to 2022/2023 in the question on section 11).</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	

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6. Action Log from the meeting on 16.12.2022	<p>Action Log from the meeting held on 16.12.2022:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PW/JC to investigate if the offer of help regarding the from LJ is beneficial regarding the temporary/ permanent supply staff agency. Page 3 - completed 2. PW/JC to investigate if Zen educate is a useful resource regarding the temporary/ permanent and supply staff agency. Page 3 – on hold pending the HR review, currently underway. 3. KC and JC to share the formal performance review with the trustees. Page 8 - completed 4. Performance report to be shared at the next Trust board meeting. Page 8 - completed 5. PO to share survey comparisons between the June 2022 and November surveys at the next Trust board meeting. Page 8 – data not comparable 6. PO to investigate the use of unsure as an answer and remove where possible. Page 8. – completed and it is being taken out of the survey <p><i>Governance Professional Note: Nick Bell joined the meeting at 6.14pm</i></p>	
7. Schools Update	<p>A brief verbal update was provided by the Director of Education on the current situation at the Northampton International Academy. The last full inspection of the school took place on 03.02.2022 and the last monitoring visit in September 2022. A second monitoring visit is due any time. The school is well placed to respond and will be able to evidence improvement, both at school and Trust level. The improvements in behaviour have been sustained and taken forward. The new Executive Headteacher took up post in February and has worked quickly to establish himself. There have been other staffing changes at the leadership level and staff feedback is positive and it is hoped that staffing should stabilise as a result. The Thompson Team are overseeing safeguarding and attendance at the school and are rigorous in their approach. Sharon Waterman is delivering an accredited leadership programme to leaders to encourage strategic thinking. The focus is now on improving the teaching and learning and the overall quality of education in order to drive an increase in outcomes.</p> <p><i>Governance Professional Note: Leigh Jones joined the meeting at 6.20pm</i></p> <p>Every teacher has received some training in pedagogy and coaching and targeted one to one coaching will take place from September 2023. A strong curriculum has been developed and is now in place for all year groups. The new EYFS team are working well and the primary phase overall is looking stronger with predicted results a lot closer to the national average than last year. The KS1 and KS2 results should be in line with the other EMAT schools.</p> <p>Another positive is the PHSE curriculum which has been strengthened since the Ofsted visit. Students are reporting that they feel safe in school. There are still some problems around the retention of knowledge in particular around</p>	

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	<p>fundamental British Values, as the quality of teaching is not helping students to remember what they have learnt.</p> <p>The school has a new careers curriculum and personal development is moving forwards.</p> <p>KS4 attainment and progress however will be below the national average. The school is doing all it can including putting a range of interventions in place, in order to improve the outcomes for students this Summer. If predictions are correct, then GCSE and A Level results will be below the national average.</p> <p>The Chair outlined his recent visit to the NIA and explained to Trustees that the whole feel of the school is different. The new Executive Headteacher already has extensive knowledge of the students and all members of staff were very positive about the journey. The Chair went on to say that as a Trust we need to think about what we can do in the future to help the cohort that are taking exams this Summer if they do not achieve as they should.</p> <p>A further Trustee has visited the school to sit on permanent exclusion panels and to attend the trust half yearly review of the school and reported back in support of the observations made.</p> <p><i>Governance Professional Note: Stephen Morales joined the meeting at 6.30pm.</i></p> <p>A further Trustee has also visited as part of sitting on a permanent exclusion panel and talked about 100-minute lessons and the GCSE pod casts access given to all Year 11 students to assist with revision.</p> <p>Following a question from a Trustee about why the trust have accepted that results will not be at national average levels when there are still six weeks to go before exams start and what could be done for students who do not achieve their potential, the CEO responded that a 'six weeks to success' programme is running at the school and that there is no acceptance of potential poor results, but staff are being realistic about potential outcomes. For those who may not achieve their full potential, convincing them to stay when they may have had poor experiences may not be the best outcome for them, but working with them to secure placements for them to go on to will be the best assistance.</p> <p>A further Trustee asked how the PHSE curriculum impacts on safety. The Director of Education explained that subjects such as bullying, how to protect yourself and safe environments are taught as part of the PHSE curriculum.</p> <p>A Trustee commended the work taking place and asked about the impact of measures introduced, in terms of the quality of education and when Trustees</p>	

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	<p>may be able to see evidence of the impact. The Director of Education outlined that the impact can already be evidenced in the primary phase. All children have improved their reading ages which is a quantifiable measure of impact. The quality of teaching is gradually improving but Trustees are unlikely to be able to see any impact of this in the KS4 and 5 results this year.</p> <p>A Trustee asked when the results for GCSE and A Level are likely to be back at national average levels. The CEO responded that the results will have returned to national average levels next Summer and reported that the Executive Headteacher has a timetable for achievement.</p> <p>A further Trustee confirmed that there is always a time lag which is not unique to this Trust and that larger changes take a certain amount of time to embed and be evidenced. A further Trustee outlined that this is the last chance to get it right for the students at the NIA.</p> <p>Update on Orchard Academy The Chair asked the CEO to provide a brief verbal update on Orchard Academy as the school has been an ongoing concern. The CEO outlined that last year, the Trust made some changes to the senior leadership team and the school was improving but not at the required speed. The Executive Headteacher for Hardington, Stimpson and Castle was asked to provide support for a rapid improvement plan for behaviour which has had significant impact.</p> <p>The Headteacher at Orchard has recently secured another headship from September and will be leaving the school in July 2022. The Headteacher at Shepherdswell will take on the role of Executive Headteacher over both Orchard and Shepherdswell and a Head of School will be appointed at Shepherdswell and in time, another at Orchard Academy.</p> <p>Outcomes at the school have improved from last year and it is anticipated that results should be just below the national average which is average for a school in this context. The school is in the Ofsted window and anticipating a visit. The trust has invested in the school, restructured, developed a new SEND unit and has a plan to move the school forward.</p> <p>Further discussion covered in confidential minute.</p> <p>A Trustee asked about identifying leadership talent and the development of leaders. The CEO responded that EMAT do not struggle uniformly to attract people to join the organisation. Leaders tend to be developed from within and a talent pool is currently being established. The CFO explained that part of the current HR review will look at how the Trust identifies emerging leaders together with the learning and development framework.</p>	

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8. Governance	<p>Election of Vice Chair</p> <p>The Chair outlined his desire to step down from the role of Trustee to concentrate on being solely a Member of EMAT. The Chair explained that he will stay in post until September when he will officially step down and an election will take place. In the meantime, the board needed to recruit a Vice Chair with the resignation of Andy Davis. Nick Bell indicated that he would be willing to act as Vice Chair.</p> <p>Trustees unanimously voted for Nick Bell to take on the role of the Vice Chair until September 2023.</p> <p>Thanks were given to Andy Davis for his work as a Trustee.</p>	
9. Updates from Last Committee Meetings	<p>The update for Standards & Performance will be given at the next meeting. In the meantime, Trustees were encouraged to read copies of the minutes available in the team.</p> <p>A verbal update on the Finance, HR and Estates Committee was provided. The committee have been scrutinising the budget assumptions and the management accounts. The finance department have completed some work around forward buying in order to make efficient use of funds and have also invested funds. There are still risks around pay awards and inflation. In terms of capital investment, the building works at Prince William School will start in the Summer of 2023 once planning consent has been awarded.</p> <p>A summary paper was submitted by the Chair of the Audit and Risk committee in advance of the meeting. There was a misunderstanding with the internal auditor resulting in an incorrect focus for the audit, which will be rectified during the internal audit taking place. The work on the risk register was briefly outlined and the intention to be in a position to be able to discuss the top five to ten risk areas in committee meetings.</p> <p>A Trustee informed the board that the deadline for the BFR submission has been extended until the end of August and if this was the intention, then a board meeting was not currently scheduled.</p>	
10. EMAT Safeguarding Update	<p><i>Governance Professional Note: Rebecca Thompson from the Thompson team joined the meeting at 7.25pm.</i></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Rebecca Thompson to the meeting. Rebecca presented the Safeguarding overview submitted in advance of the meeting. The following items were covered: Training, Policy reviews, supervision sessions, MASH referrals data, mental health working party and the work of the safeguarding forum.</p>	

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	<p>The Chair gave thanks for the work being undertaken.</p> <p>Following a question from a Trustee about whether all staff who should have had safeguarding training have completed the training, Rebecca Thompson confirmed that safeguarding training has been delivered across all settings and for new staff and a video provided for governors and Trustees. A further Trustee asked a question about school single central records and whether they were being regularly checked. The Director of Education outlined that a check takes place regularly as part of reviews and audits and actions are followed up by the Thompson Team to ensure completion.</p> <p>A Trustee asked whether 69 mental health cases was a high number, whether a flavour of the types of issues could be provided and whether the Trust was doing all it could to support people. Rebecca Thompson outlined that the cases are predominantly in the secondary schools and are wide ranging. Mental Health First Aid training is currently being refreshed and all schools will have a Mental Health First Aider in place. The issue is a national issue and the number of young people with mental health and wellbeing concerns is increasing.</p> <p>A Trustee thanked the Thompson Team and explained that it was reassuring to have their involvement in schools.</p> <p>Following a question from a Trustee around how many staff are calling the Thompson team for support, Rebecca Thompson outlined that the numbers of staff calling directly are increasing.</p> <p>The Chair gave thanks to the Thompson Team for the work undertaken.</p> <p><i>Governance Professional Note: Rebecca Thompson left the meeting at 7.40pm.</i></p>	
11. Governance Update	<p>The skills audit circulated in advance of the meeting was not discussed due to time constraints.</p> <p>The Head of Governance reported that only two Trustees had returned the self-evaluation of governance form distributed some weeks ago. The Head of Governance agreed to recirculate the form and urged Trustees to complete it.</p> <p>It was agreed that Kate Whittlesey will sit on the Standards and Performance Committee and will be noted as the SEND Trustee in line with DfE requirements.</p> <p>The Head of Governance explained that in order to comply with statutory regulations, the board should be meeting six times per year.</p> <p>Trustees agreed to increase full board meetings to six per year.</p>	<p>Head of Governance to re-circulate the self-evaluation of governance form for completion</p>

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	<p>The Head of Governance outlined that linked schools will need to be re-visited in the light of the new Trustee, Kate Whittlesey.</p> <p>The school hours consultation was briefly introduced and the background to the increase in hours provided. The Government White Paper of March 2022 specified that by September 2023, schools must be providing 32.5 hours of education per week. EMAT schools have looked at the hours they currently provide and where necessary, have set out proposals for some slight increases to the school day which have gone out to consultation with both parental and staff.</p> <p>The NIA are reconsidering their proposal in the face of parental opposition which will be circulated to Trustees for approval outside the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees agreed the proposals put forward with the exception of the NIA.</p> <p>The CEO outlined that a Trustees had visited both Orchard and Shepherdswell and had attended one of the local advisory board meetings which had been very well received. A further Trustee is attending a different local advisory board meeting in June. All Trustees were encouraged to attend a local advisory board meeting of their linked school and to visit the school during the day to carry out a monitoring visit, wherever possible.</p>	<p>Head of Governance to re-send the email to Trustees regarding linked schools</p> <p>Once received, Head of Governance to circulate NIA schools hours proposal to Trustees for approval</p>
12. Finance Matters	<p>A brief verbal update on the financial position was provided by the CFI. The Finance, HR and Estates Committee had reviewed the half yearly results. The 106k surplus was close to the budgetary figure. Figures for March are anticipated to show a slight dip as the Trust is using contingency funds to cover the unfunded pay rises. From April, the Trust will be in receipt of a grant to cover this. Work is being undertaken on the budgets. Energy companies have quoted an increase of 372% against a budgeted increase of 300%. Alternative suppliers are currently being research and sourced in an effort to minimise the increase. The Trust is looking to secure a one-year deal and then look to sign up to a longer-term deal once the market has steadied. Planning permission has also been sought for the development of the sports hall at Prince William School.</p> <p>The Chair gave thanks to the IT team for the smooth implementation and transition to the Arbor system.</p>	
13. CEO Report & Trust Improvement Plan	<p>The CEO provided a brief update on the trust improvement plan which was provided to Trustees in advance of the meeting. Predicted outcomes were briefly discussed and an assurance given that the current data is showing that the Trust results this year will be closer to the national average and where they are below, the central team are aware of the issues.</p> <p>The CEO informed Trustees of an enquiry received from a local school who may be interested in joining EMAT, which came as a result of the work undertaken on SRMA by the CFO.</p>	

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	<p>The Chair noted the intense recruitment of governors at school level and the current challenges faced.</p> <p>A Trustee gave thanks to the central team for the potential growth.</p> <p>The CEO gave thanks to Trustees for the hard work undertaken.</p>	
14. Items For Next Meeting	No items were discussed due to time constraints.	
15. Any Other Business	There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.00pm.	
16. Dates of Next Meetings	<p>Dates for the academic year 2022/2023 have been set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 24 July 2023 at 3.00pm – 5.00pm – last full board meeting of this academic year 	Invites to meetings had been sent

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

Signed by Chair of Trust Full Board.....

Name..... Date.....

Action log of the Trust Full Board Meeting held 04.05.2023

No.	Action	Owner
1.	Head of Governance to re-circulate the self-evaluation of governance form for completion	JP
2.	Head of Governance to re-send the email to Trustees regarding linked schools	JP
3.	Once received, Head of Governance to circulate NIA schools hours proposal to Trustees for approval	JP