

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of the video conference meeting held at 19:45 hrs on 2 September 2021

Directors	Office	Term
* <i>Andrew Armour</i>		31/08/2025
Gary Benn		31/08/2025
Melissa Challinor	Vice Chair	31/08/2025
Alison Meadows		11/05/2025
Sarah Mitchell	Executive Headteacher [EHT]	Ex-Officio
Andrew Taylor	Chair	31/08/2025
Liam Tobin		22/07/2023
<i>In attendance:</i>		
Tom Bennett	Clerk	
* <i>indicates absence</i>		

32/21 Apologies for absence

Andrew Taylor welcomed Alison Meadows to her first Board meeting.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Andrew Armour.

Melissa Challinor took the Chair

33/21 Chair

The meeting noted that Andrew Taylor had expressed an interest in being re-elected as the Chair of the Board. No other nominations had been received prior to the meeting and following a proposal from Melissa Challinor, seconded by Gary Benn, Andrew Taylor was unanimously elected as the Chair for the new Academic Year.

Andrew Taylor took over the Chair

34/21 Vice-Chair

The meeting noted Melissa Challinor had expressed an interest in being re-elected as the Vice-Chair of the Board. No other nominations had been received prior to the meeting and following a proposal from the Chair, seconded by Gary Benn, Melissa Challinor was unanimously elected as the Vice-Chair for the new Academic Year.

35/21 Notification of AoB

None.

36/21 Notification of business interests/ self-declaration

Gary Benn declared that his wife worked for GOMAT, and he worked for Eddisons who provided services to GOMAT.

No other director declared a potential conflict of interest on any matters to be discussed at the meeting or that they have received or given hospitality or a gift that could be perceived to compromise their impartiality when dealing with matters for the MAT

It was **agreed** that all Directors should complete and send the Clerk, if they had not already done so, the annual declaration of business interest form to update the business interest register and the HMRC Self Declaration of being Fit and Proper Person by the end of September.

Action

All

37/21	Governance	a) Membership of the Board	The Chair reported that Andrew Armour had advised that, after over five years as a director, he planned to stand down at the end of the current year.	It was agreed to find suitable candidates, particularly ones with a financial background, who would like to be considered and nominated to the Trust’s Members as a director.	AT/All
		b) Code of Conduct for Directors 2021	The Code of Conduct for Directors had been updated in 2020 and followed best practice as set out by the National Governance Association (NGA), the membership organisation for governors, trustees, and clerks of schools in England.	It was agreed to adopt the code for the new academic year with no further changes.	All
		c) Scheme of Delegation	The meeting noted and agreed the Scheme of Delegation setting out the respective decision making and operational responsibilities of the Directors, the Local Governing Bodies [LGBs], the Executive Headteacher and Headteachers of each academy within the Trust.		EHT
		d) Audit Committee	The Chair reported that the Board had appointed the following as members of Audit Committee in 2020, for a two-year term:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Armour • John Luke • Liam Tobin • Paul Gray (independent member) • Ursula Lyons (independent member) 	
			John Luke had subsequently stood down as a director and following Andrew Armour’s decision to stand down as a director at the end of the year, there would be two vacancies on the Audit Committee.	It was agreed :	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to appoint Gary Benn as a member of the Audit Committee for the current academic year, following which the Board would need to appoint all the members of the Committee for a new two-year term. 	GB/EHT
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liam Tobin would “shadow” Andrew Armour in his role as the Chair of the Audit Committee with the intention of putting himself forward for the position in 2022-23. 	LT
		e) Annual Programme of Business	The meeting noted and approved the Annual Programme of Business setting out the Board’s responsibilities and at which meeting it was planned to address them.		EHT/ Clerk
38/21	Policies	a) Charges and Remissions Policy 2021	The meeting received and agreed to adopt the Charges and Remissions Policy 2021 setting out the Trust’s policy on charging parents for school activities such as school trips and events, swimming, and music lessons.		EHT
		b) Investment Policy 2021	The meeting received and agreed to adopt the Investment Policy 2021.		EHT

c) Whistleblowing Policy 2021

The meeting received and **agreed** to adopt the Whistleblowing Policy 2021

EHT

d) Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy 2021

The meeting received the new Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy 2021 that had been drafted to protect staff from unreasonable and unacceptable behaviour from parents and others making a complaint to the school.

It was **agreed** to adopt the Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy 2021.

EHT

39/21 Corporate/ Strategy

a) Trust priorities for 2021-2022

The EHT set out the Trust's priorities for the new Academic Year.

The start of the new school year at both academies had been a lot more positive than when they last re-opened in 2020. Children were happy to be back at school and staff were happier following the removal of a lot of the measures put in place to prevent the spread of Covid. Both schools had worked hard in returning each school to pre-Covid normality such as having in-person school collective worship and assemblies.

The priorities for both schools included ensuring that teaching standards and quality of education and learning were as high as possible.

The focus of the new Ofsted framework was now on leadership that included teachers with leadership responsibilities such as subject leaders. It was important staff with leadership responsibilities understood their roles and how these impacted on the teaching of their subjects across the whole school. The Trust has focused on providing training and support to leadership at all levels across the Trust, with a focus on subject leaders.

A main priority will be delivering the investment in finance and resources agreed by the Board at its last meeting to increase the number of classes at DPA to accommodate the increasing number of children wishing to go to the school. Long term this will generate more income to develop the school and teaching and learning further and make it an even more attractive to prospective parents wishing to find a school for their children. This will be reviewed carefully as the bulge in numbers may require a different structure next academic year.

Another key priority will be the induction of new teaching staff as well as a new leadership team to support the Head of School [HoS] at DPA following the departure of the Year 5-6 teacher, Gary Brown, who with his previous experience as Head teacher has been a great asset to the HoS.

The Trust will also be implementing the Early Careers Framework for a new member of staff at DPA, a government teacher recruitment and retention strategy to provide two year's support for early career teachers.

b) Trust Growth 1

[See confidential minute].

c) Trust Growth 2

[See confidential minute].

d) 2021-22 School Development Plans

The meeting received and noted the 2021-22 School Development Plans for each Academy within the Trust.

40/21 COVID 19

The EHT highlighted the main changes to the Covid Risk Assessment for the full re-opening of each of the schools in September 2021.

The Department for Education [DfE] had significantly changed the guidelines for dealing with Covid 19; removing the need for pupils and teachers to isolate in “bubbles” and allowing pupils and staff more opportunities to meet and interact more, particularly outside.

Teachers had felt very isolated working in “bubbles” and had welcomed the relaxation in the measures and the ability to meet and interact more with colleagues as well as all children at each school.

The Trust had retained some of the measures put in place last year that were no longer required by the DfE to maintain the level of confidence of parents and staff in providing a safe place for children, staff, and visitors.

Both schools were well positioned should the DfE require all schools to re-introduce “bubbles” and other isolating measures.

The Board congratulated the EHT and her team on managing the many changing DfE’s requirements and the difficulties that had arisen managing Covid-19.

41/21 Risk Register

The meeting noted that, with the schools being closed for the summer holidays, there had been little change to the risk register since the Board last reviewed it in July.

The EHT advised that both schools were finding it difficult to recruit part-time and fixed-term staff to cover Midday Assistant [MDAs] roles and Learning Support Assistants [LSAs] needed to support the increasing number of children with special educational needs or disabilities [SEND].

42/21 Minutes

The meeting approved the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

43/21 Matters Arising

All the matters arising from the last meeting had been either completed or covered at the meeting.

44/21 Finance

a) Requests for expenditure above EHT’s approval limit

None.

b) Requests for expenditure from LGBs

None.

45/21 Personnel

The Board received, considered, and **agreed** to approve the MAT’s Performance policies on:

- Staff Grievance and Discipline Policy
- Teacher Appraisal and Capability

EHT

46/21 EHT and HT’s Performance and Pay

The Board considered and **agreed** to the re-appointment of Craig Duncan as the external adviser to support the MAT/EHT in the EHT/HT’s Performance Review.

EHT

It was **agreed** to circulate the EHT Performance Management Review [PMR] targets after the meeting.

Chair

47/21 Any other business

None.

48/21 Date/time of future meetings

- Tuesday 30/11/2021
- Tuesday 03/05/2022
- Thursday 14/07/2022

All meetings start at 19:45 hrs.

Approved by the Board on 30 November 2021