

**The Heath Family (NW) Multi Academy Trust**  
**PART I - Minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on**  
**Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 8.00 am**

**\*\*\* This meeting was held remotely using Microsoft Teams \*\*\***

| <u>Present:</u> Helen Stevenson (Chair), Edward Vitalis, Alison Duckworth, Tony Gundersen, Janine Inglis, Mark Stanton, Annette Williams, David Donnelly, Sharon Black, Craig Parkinson, Judith McConville |   | <u>Apologies:</u> Kate Whittlesey, Christopher Davis, Karl Smith, Morag Davies<br>Non attenders: |     |      |       |
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|  |   | Clerk: Trish Roberts   |     |      |       |
| Items  | Discussion  | Action   | Who | When | Notes |
| <b>1. Welcome, introductions &amp; apologies</b>   | Ms Stevenson welcomed everyone to the meeting.<br><br>Apologies were accepted from Ms K Whittlesey, Mr C Davis, Mr K Smith and Ms M Davies.   |  |     |      |       |
| <b>2. Declaration of Business and Pecuniary Interests</b>  | Trustees confirmed that there were no interests to be declared in relation to this meeting:<br><br>Helen Stevenson – Partner/Sole Proprietor of Satis Education, Director of Optimum Education Resourcing Ltd, Contract with another Trust in the area (Frank Field Education Trust), Related to a Local Governor at one of THF schools (Sister).<br><br>Edward Vitalis - Chief Operating Officer at Bright Futures Educational Trust, Trustee at NHS Salford Clinical Commissioning Group, Trustee at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust<br><br>Alison Duckworth – Director of Epona Marketing<br><br>Tony Gundersen – Director of TG Business Services Ltd, Governor at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School<br><br>Mark Stanton – Trustee at Pestalozzi International Foundation<br><br>Annette Williams – CEO at Weaver Trust, Governor at Pattishall CofE Primary School |  |     |      |       |
| <b>3. To receive/ ratify PART I Minutes from THF Board</b>   | Trustees received an electronic copy of PART I minutes from the MAT Board meeting held on 22.04.21. There were no amendments to be made and therefore the minutes were accepted as a true record and ratified.  | Chair of the Board to sign agreed MAT Board Minutes from 22.04.21                                | HS  | ASAP |       |

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| meeting held on 22.04.21  | <b>RESOLVE: That PART I minutes of the MAT Board meeting held on 22.04.21 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</b>   |   |   |  |  |
| 4. To review Matters Arising not included on the Agenda (to include Action Tracker) | <p><b>Matters Arising from Minutes of 22.04.21</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> <p><b>Trustees also received an electronic copy of THF Action Log dated 27.05.21 prior to the meeting.</b></p> <p>Mr Donnelly assured Trustees that all outstanding actions are on track.</p> <p><b>Trust Board Self-Evaluation:</b> Following discussion it was agreed that Mr Stanton will lead a working party, made up of Trustees/Executive Officers. The group will review the completed Trust Board Self-Evaluation document, and assess/assure themselves of the evidence that underpins the ratings that have been given. A summary report will then be produced and brought to Board for final approval.</p> <p>Mr Gundersen volunteered to take part in this working party, and Mr Stanton (with assistance from TGM) will contact absent Trustees in order to give them the opportunity to take part as well. Further discussion followed and it was agreed that the completion date for this piece of work will be 30.06.21.</p> | <p>Trust Board Self-Evaluation Working Party to be set up.</p> <p>Self-Evaluation doc to be reviewed by working party, and report back to MAT Board</p> | <p>M Stanton / CEO / COO / TGM</p> <p>Trust Board Working Party</p> | <p>ASAP</p> <p>Review by 30.06.21<br/>Report back to Board on 08.07.21</p> |  |
| 5. Chair's Action Report (to receive)   | <p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Chair's Action &amp; Governor Membership Update 27.05.21 report prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees noted the report; and Ms Stevenson provided a brief summary with regards the Role of Members. Ms Stevenson also advised that both herself and CEO are due to meet with the Members following this meeting, in order to provide an update on key developments.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly also noted that the Trust is still in a positive position with regards Governor vacancies.</p>   |   |   |  |  |
| 6. Coronavirus Update   | <p>Mr Donnelly provided an update to Trustees.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly explained that the Trust is still in a similar position as reported during last meeting; and that weekly updates continue to be circulated to Trustees. Mr Donnelly</p>  |   |   |  |  |

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|                             | <p>then went on to provide school-level data, ie there has been an increase in Covid cases at PFP and meetings have taken place with the Director of Public Health; it has been highlighted that Covid procedures have been followed inherently and that PFP is a safe environment. Mr Donnelly then went on to explain the restrictions that are currently in place and the expected timeframe for their relaxation, ie face masks are no longer worn in classrooms, but continue to be worn in corridors and communal areas, and class bubbles still remain. There is an obvious break with the summer holidays, and if national restrictions are lifted in June 2021 and remain so during the summer break, schools will return to a more normal state after the holidays. Time off due to Covid continues to be relatively low; regular testing continues and a small number of cases have been identified.</p> <p><b>Q: If masks are no longer needed to be worn in the classroom; have those children who were refusing to wear a mask and as such were learning remotely, return to school?</b></p> <p><b>A: Schools have worked closely with those children who were refusing to wear masks, and as such they have managed to bring the number of refusers down to 0. This was the case prior to the change to guidance re wearing face masks in the classroom. Mr Donnelly also noted that some children are exempt from wearing face masks.</b></p> <p>Mr Donnelly then provided details with regards face masks and the differences between primary and secondary schools; ie in secondary schools, both staff and students must wear face masks in communal areas; in primary schools, it is only staff.</p> <p>Trustees thanked Mr Donnelly for the update.</p> |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>7. CEO Report</b></p> | <p>Trustees received electronic copies of the CEO report (dated May 2021) prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly reported:</p> <p><b>Overall</b> – this items remains graded as ‘red’ due to Covid continuing to have a considerable impact on education nationally and whilst no comparative measures are available on progress and attainment it is likely that the impact has been disproportionately high on many of our pupils.</p> <p><b>School Improvement</b> – Mr Donnelly advised that school improvement remains a key issue; in that there are still no external performance measures. Schools are busy with</p>   |  |  |  |  |

Centre Assessed Grades (CAG), and these processes should be completed within the next couple of weeks. Ms Black then provided further details in that all schools are following a rigorous approach to CAG; noting that Trust-wide monitoring for Science took place yesterday. Ms Black confirmed that schools are working really hard in order to get the TAG submitted within the given timeframe.

**Ofsted** – Mr Donnelly advised that there is a possibility that all of our schools could be inspected within the next 12 months; inspections are approx. 18 months behind schedule and Ofsted and looking at plans on how they remodel inspections in Autumn Term 2021.

**Q: *Where are we up to with self-evaluation for each school?***

**Mr Donnelly provided a summary for each school, both in terms of actual Ofsted grading, and current grading based on internal evidence/validation).**

**Q: *If a school is currently graded RI, and could potentially continue RI, is there a risk associated with this?***

**A: *Schools can have 2 consecutive RI gradings; but inspectors will need to see evidence that the school is moving towards Good.***

**Q: *Although we know that inspections are impacted in terms of how children perform on the day of inspection, inspectors also look at the progress over time; as such if a school has low numbers of deprivation, there is an expectation that children will perform above national levels. Are we as a Trust confident with regards our curriculum?***

**A: *Yes, inspections have changed in that they are less data driven, and inspectors judge the curriculum in terms of its quality. Our primary schools have worked together and have agreed a common curriculum; which has enabled better understanding across all schools and it is appropriately sequenced. We are confident that the curriculum is good, however it has not been externally tested.***

**Q: *Have we had an external curriculum review?***

**A: *The Shaw Trust had been commissioned to carry out an external review, but the consultant carrying out the review had been provided with a different model. As such, a full review will need to be carried out after half term.***

**Ms Black also spoke about peer review processes which will be taking place after half term; primary Principals will be visiting each other's schools and observing how the**

*curriculum is implemented and will also have opportunity to speak to pupils and scrutinise books. This will enable them to reflect on their own practice. Ms Black also spoke about Teacher Assessments and how Fischer Family Trust (FFT) is used to support assessment processes.*

Further discussion followed (see PART II for details)

**Health & Safety** – this item remains ‘red’ due to the current Covid 19 situation continuing to constitute a significant H&S risk for all children, staff and visitors.

**HR** – DD explained the rationale as to why the grading for this item moved to Amber. (See PART II minutes for full details).

**Attendance** – DD advised that currently all but one school’s attendance is higher than national; DD then provided further background information in relation to that school.

DD also explained the attendance figures on page 3 of the CEO report in detail.

**Q: *If a school is in category and their attendance is below national, how big a risk is this when it comes to the next inspection?***

**A: *It would be a red flag for any inspection, however a school in category does have an advantage, in that the school is inspected by a HMI who will know the context of the school and will review what they are doing/continue to do to the address the issue of attendance/persistent attendance. DD also assured Trustees that effective/appropriate processes are in place at all schools and that they are being followed. SB also confirmed that processes are tight and being adhered to.***

DD then spoke about the importance of the curriculum, in that if children are engaged in their learning, they will want to come to school

SB also confirmed that processes are tight and being adhered to; and then went on to explain a key focus for next year, which will be to look at Character Education. SB explained that some children face significant challenges in school and at home, and as such Character Education will look to develop their resilience and provide support. SB added that this will need investment, but over time the impact should improve attendance overall.

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|  | <p>DD noted that at the school were the percentage is lower than national, the majority of children attend well; and that it is a minority who are non-attenders.</p> <p><b>Q: With regards persistent non-attenders, if we were to phone the leadership would they know where the children are?</b></p> <p><b>A: Yes, attendance calls are made each day, and if there is no answer, staff will knock on doors. The school follows up every absence, for every child, every day.</b></p> <p><b>Exclusions</b> – DD advised that behaviour levels have been and continue to be of concern; this is common across all schools, as children continue to struggle with returning to school routines. DD then explained interventions that are being introduced in order to address this issue, ie a Nurture Group is being trialled at LMP, and if it works, the project will be rolled out across other schools.</p> <p>Trustees requested that the Nurture Group project be discussed further at E&amp;S. DD explained that the Assistant Director of T&amp;L (SEND) is leading on this, and as such will be invited to provide a presentation to E&amp;S at their next meeting (15.07.21).</p> <p><b>Buildings</b> – It was noted that this item will be covered within the Premises section of the Operations Update.</p> <p>Ms Stevenson thanked Mr Donnelly for his presentation, and also thanked everyone for their contributions.</p> | <p>ADoTL (SEND) to be invited to next E&amp;S meeting 15.07.21 (Presentation re Direction of travel re Nurture Group Project)</p> | <p>CEO</p> | <p>ASAP</p> |  |
| <p><b>8. Trust Committee Updates</b></p> | <p><b>Education &amp; Standards Committee Update</b> - Trustees received an electronic copy of the E&amp;S Committee board report dated 13.05.21 prior to the meeting.</p> <p>In the committee Chair’s absence, Mr Donnelly was asked to provide a brief overview of the report. Mr Donnelly advised that at the last E&amp;S meeting the committee discussed the systems that are in place with regards Centre Assessed Grades, target setting etc. They were also provided with a suite of draft QA documents which look to align QA processes across the Trust for the coming year. Trustees who were present at the meeting also confirmed that the board report was a true reflection of the meeting.</p> <p>There being no questions, Trustees thanked Mr Donnelly for his summary.</p>   |   |            |             |  |
|  | <p><b>Business, Finance &amp; Audit Committee Update</b> – Trustees received an electronic copy of the BF&amp;A Committee board report dated 20.05.21 prior to the meeting.</p>   |   |            |             |  |

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|                                      | <p>Mr Vitalis (Chair of BF&amp;A Committee) confirmed that the report was a true reflection of the meeting. He then provided a brief summary; making particular reference to the Budget 2021-22. Mr Vitalis advised that following detailed discussions the BF&amp;A committee supported the recommendation to approve the budget for 2021-22, noting that they were pleased to see the positive financial turnaround which has taken place over the past 18 months. Mr Vitalis then provided further details in relation to discussions that had taken place in respect of the reported budget figures, potential risks appertained to the budget, ie salary pay freeze and their possible impact, and the actions resulting from the meeting. Mr Vitalis noted that committee have requested a further version of the budget which shows the implementation of efficiencies from the SRMA report; school level recovery plans, written reports for future BF&amp;A meetings in respect of the Operations Update, and that due to time limitations the Fraud Policy and Governor Expenses &amp; Allowances Policy be deferred to next meeting (01.07.21).</p> <p>Mr Vitalis confirmed that that committee agree/support the Budget 2021-22 and therefore their recommendation is that the Budget be approved by the Board.</p> <p>There being no objections, the Trustees</p> <p><b>RESOLVE: that The Heath Family NW budget as outlined for 2021-22 is approved</b></p> <p>Mr Vitalis also offered to field any questions from Trustees in respect of his summary; and there being no questions, Trustees thanked Mr Vitalis for his report.</p> <p>It was also noted that Trustees requested that for future years, approval of the Budget is added as a separate agenda item, rather than it being appended to the BF&amp;A report.</p> |   |                       |                         |  |
| <p><b>9. Link Trustee Update</b></p> | <p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Link Trustee Update report prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly provided a brief overview in relation to the document, noting that those Trustees who at the last meeting provided an expression of interest with regards taking on a Link Trustee role, had been allocated a school, and that the Chair had stepped down from a Link Trustee role in order to allow for this. Mr Donnelly also explained that Mr Stanton has been allocated to both Litherland Schools; this is so that one Trustee is linked whilst the Litherland Integration project is taking place, and as such once complete the allocations may be reviewed.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly then asked Trustees if they were happy to approve the changes, and there being no objections raised, the updated allocations were approved.</p>  | <p>Link Trustees to be contacted in order to ascertain how they wish to proceed with regards contacting their allocated school/s.</p> <p>Link Trustee documentation to be circulated to all Link Trustees</p> | <p>TGM</p> <p>TGM</p> | <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> |  |

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|  | <p>Following discussion, it was agreed that each Link Trustee will be contacted individually in order to ascertain when they would be available to take up their role, ie some Trustees indicated they would prefer to contact schools prior to Summer holidays, whilst others indicated that they would be available from September onwards.</p> <p>Mr Vitalis also noted that he has found it helpful to have the support of the TGM with regards managing appointments; and also noted that he is receiving LGB meeting invites, although will not be attending meetings. Mr Donnelly advised that that these communications may be in order to keep him updated, but that schools will be made aware that Link Trustees are not expected to attend meetings.</p> <p>A copy of the Link Trustee documentation will also be forwarded to all Link Trustees for information.</p>  |   |            |             |  |
| <p><b>10. Governance Update (incl Trustee Recruitment)</b></p> | <p>Trustees received an electronic copy of the Governance Update Report May 2021 prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mrs Roberts provided a brief summary in relation to the items listed within the report.</p> <p>Mrs Roberts also updated Trustees in relation to the appointment/election processes currently taking place at HPS; noting that an email has been received from the Chair of LGB in respect of one of the Trust Appointed Governor roles. Mrs Roberts advised that Mr Paul Stanley has agreed to stand for a 2nd term of office and both the LGB and CEO have supported the nomination, and to this effect the next step would be for the board to approve the appointment.</p> <p>Ms Stevenson proposed to approve the appointment, and there being no objections, Mr Paul Stanley was duly appointed for a further 4 year term of office (27.05.21 – 26.05.25).</p> <p>Mr Donnelly also advised that he has spoken to the respective Chairs of Governors in relation to the primary Exec Principal role, and will be attending the next LGB meetings so that governors can speak to him about it directly.</p> | <p>Letter of Appt to be sent to newly appointed Trust Appointed Governor (HPS)</p> <p>School to be notified of appointment</p> <p>DfE GIAS database to be updated</p> | <p>TGM</p> | <p>ASAP</p> |  |
| <p><b>11. Litherland Project Update</b></p>                    | <p>Mr Parkinson provided an update with regards the Litherland Project, noting that the RIBA Stage 4 outcome report had been received from Kier, and had gone to Faithful &amp; Gould (Trust Capital Partners) for validation. Mr Parkinson also noted that concerns had been raised as the cost of the works had gone above the agreed threshold, and as such</p>   |   |            |             |  |



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|                               | <p>a review exercise had been conducted. Mr Parkinson advised that the exercise had been beneficial as it allowed Exec Officers to reconsider plans, and after some minor tweaks, the costs have been brought back in line and the project still looks to achieve the best use of available space. Mr Parkinson also noted that updated plans/drawings are back and have been reviewed by SLT at both schools; and that due to the timing in which plans have been received, the alignment with meetings has not been perfect.</p> <p>Mr Parkinson then went to explained that the next stage will be to get the Project Board up and running, and set up an initial meeting so that the plans can be reviewed/agreed, with a view to getting builders on site during the summer holidays.</p>  |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>12. Risk Update</b></p> | <p>Trustees received electronic copies of the Trust’s Risk Register prior to the meeting; and reviewed those items allocated to full MAT Board.</p> <p><b>Item 3 – Area of Risk: Lack of RSC Confidence</b><br/>Mr Donnelly updated Trustees in respect of the regular meetings that take place with the RSC; Ms Stevenson (Chair of Board) also attends these meetings and noted that they are very positive, and that the RSC offers a great deal of challenge. The next meeting is due to take place during the first week back after half term, and the focus will be specifically around progress being made at TPS.</p> <p><b>Item 16 – Area of Risk: Covid 19 – Adverse effect on pupil progress and support</b><br/>Mr Donnelly advised that this risk will potentially remain for the next 2-3 years, due to the impact that Covid has had on children’s education, and the length of time it will take in order for children to catch up.</p> <p>Mr Donnelly then provided details with regards catch up strategy drawing particular attention to the need to be mindful of how children will cope with proposed interventions, ie a lot of the children within Trust schools come from areas of great deprivation, and as such they already find attending school for 6 hours a day extremely difficult, therefore if the expectation was for them to attend for longer periods of time, it may cause them to disengage. In order to address these potential risks, our School Improvement teams will review government recommendations; with a view to assessing/identifying the most appropriate catch up strategies for our students. Mr Donnelly noted that this will be a fundamental part of the Trust strategy going forwards. Mr Donnelly also advised that catch up plans will be shared with Trustees.</p> |  |  |  |  |

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|                                  | Trustees voiced concern regarding the political scene around catch up and the importance of evidencing discussions/decisions; noting that documentation needs to also reflect that THF have looked at what other Trusts are doing, and can provide evidence to show that we have chosen the best evidence-based model of catch up for our children. Mr Donnelly assured Trustees that different catch up models have and will continue to be considered, but current thinking is that accelerating Teaching & Learning during the school day is best for our children.<br><br><b>Risk &amp; Reporting Workshop</b> – Ms Stevenson thanked Ms Inglis for the work completed with the Risk Workshop, and noted that she looks forward to seeing how it proceeds. |   |  |  |  |
| <b>13. Policies for Approval</b> | There were no policies for approval for this meeting.  |   |  |  |  |
| <b>14. AoB</b>                   | There were no AoB to be discussed.   |   |  |  |  |
| <b>15. Date of Next Meeting</b>  | The date of the next MAT Board meeting is Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2021<br><br>Mr Donnelly suggested that it may be a good opportunity to revisit the Trust’s Strategy document at the July MAT Board meetings; Trustees agreed.<br><br>Ms Stevenson closed the meeting by giving formal thanks to the Exec Officers, not only for what they have provided for this meeting, but also over the past months.   | New agenda Item for 08.07.21 – Trust Strategy |  |  |  |

Meeting closed at 9.15 am

These minutes are approved as a true record of the meeting

Signed: .....

**[H Stevenson – Chair]**

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021