

Board of Trustees/Directors

Minutes

Monday 19th May 2025

4.00pm

Held in person at Landscope School House and online via Microsoft 'Teams'

Present: Cheryl Mathieson (Chair)
Nicky Dunford (CEO)
Paul Waterworth (PW)
Dominic Course (DC)
Christine Cottle (CC)
Graeme Scott (GS)

In Attendance: Matt Matthew (DCEO)
Charlotte Roe (GP)

Minutes: Nicol Bush- Clerk to the Trust

No	Item	ACTION
1.	Welcome and apologies The Chair opened the meeting with a warm welcome to the Trustees. Apologies were received and accepted from KE, MT and BT.	
2.	Declarations of interest There were no new declarations of interests brought to the meeting.	
3.	Any other business The Chair noted that the recent email received about the Tiverton Federation of Schools (which had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting) would be discussed under agenda item 9. Trust growth.	
4.	Approval of Part I meeting minutes from 31st March 2025 The Part I minutes were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly by the Chair. 4.1 Part II minutes. The Chair raised the issue of circulating the confidential Part II minutes. The GP agreed to liaise with the Clerk to develop a secure and timely process. <u>ACTION-</u> GP to liaise with the Clerk to the Trust to establish a robust process for securely sharing Part II minutes	CLERK GP/CLERK
5.	Matters arising from 31st March 2025 not on the agenda 5.1 CEO to update on succession plan for staff- The Chair noted that the Remuneration meeting had not yet taken place, and as a result, the Staff Succession Plan would be available in July. The CEO confirmed this would be addressed at the July Trust's Academy Heads meeting following which the Plan would be brought to the Remuneration Committee at its July meeting and then on to the Board. 5.2 Update on DCEO and Chair's meeting re support staff salary structure- The Chair said she had not yet met with the DCEO but would do so prior to the Remuneration meeting in July. 5.3 Confirmation of CEO letter sent to Governors regarding the Trust's structural changes- The CEO confirmed the letter had gone out to Governors.	CEO Chair

	ACTION- Clerk to add - Staff succession plan and update on DCEO/CEO support staff salary structure- to the July BOT agenda item 5. Matters arising.	
6.	<p>Trust Risk Register</p> <p>6.1 Update on Risk Register working party</p> <p>The CEO provided an update on the Trust's risk register. She had been reviewing and refining the register to ensure accuracy, focusing on incorporating broader risk areas beyond education such as buildings, finance, and pupil numbers. The CEO said she had been visiting schools to assess risk criteria and had worked with Heads to self-assess their schools. These assessments were then reviewed with the EIT. A new pro forma was being developed to standardise school-level risk assessments. The CEO said she aimed to complete this work by the end of term, with school visits scheduled at a rate of three per week. The updated risk register was intended to inform Trust-level discussions.</p> <p>6.2 Meeting to consider the risk categories highlighted for Board review with particular scrutiny of any amber or red risks to ensure they are discussed within the meeting</p> <p>The Chair noted that the Trustees had recently agreed to review key risk categories including Trust growth, reputation, competition, strategic governance, policy management, financial management and going concern within the course of regular meeting discussions. It was anticipated that all categories would be covered during the current meeting, with a review of RAG ratings at the end to determine if any adjustments were needed based on the discussions.</p> <p>6.3 Meeting to consider any risk register issues brought forward from committee meetings</p> <p>There were no issues brought forward to the meeting.</p>	
7.	<p>Chief Executive Officer's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trustees highlighted the effectiveness of the relational approach within SEND, noting that where it had been embedded, it had shown real success. A question was raised about the obstacles to embedding the approach more widely. It was queried whether these challenges stemmed from a lack of knowledge, resistance from more traditionally minded staff, or other factors. <p><i>The CEO explained that the main barrier to embedding the relational approach across the Trust was inconsistent access to training. Staff who joined after the initial audit and training phases (such as new Academy heads) had not received the same level of preparation and were therefore less familiar with what relational behaviour should look like in practice. The CEO added that efforts were being made to address this through follow-up training and online resources. The Trust was working to ensure consistency by maintaining accessible training materials and supporting staff who had missed earlier phases.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A question was raised about how the previous Climate and Sustainability Plan would be integrated into the curriculum, recognising that the curriculum formed a key part of the plan. The Chair asked if this would be addressed separately or incorporated into existing curriculum planning.</i> <p>The DCEO explained that the first step would be to conduct a baseline audit of current sustainability activities across schools. The CEO highlighted Landscope School as an example of strong practice, with extensive community engagement and integration of sustainability themes into the curriculum. Activities included work with local eco groups, teaching on fair trade and charities, and embedding sustainability as a consistent theme across assemblies and lessons. The CEO emphasised the importance of presenting sustainability as a "golden thread" throughout the curriculum.</p>	
8.	Deficit Recovery Plan	

	Part II was taken	
9.	Trust Growth Part II was taken 9.1 CEO to update meeting re management partnership 9.2 Update on East Devon schools	
10.	Audit Committee <i>No meeting in Summer 1 – next meeting 3rd July 2025</i> Chair of Committee to raise any interim urgent matters The Chair of the Audit Committee said since the last meeting, the only notable development had been the appointment of a new IT support contractor, as outlined in the CEO's report.	
11.	Finance & General Purposes Committee 11.1 Minutes from 16th May Chair of Committee to outline any additional points and take questions In the absence of the F&GP Chair, CM noted that the F&GP meeting had taken place only the previous Friday. As at the time of reporting, the minutes were not yet available. She added that the main focus of the meeting had been on the deficit recovery plan, which had already been discussed in the meeting. There were no other significant matters addressed during that meeting.	
12.	Remuneration Committee <i>No meeting in Summer 1 – next meeting 11th July 2025</i> There were no issues raised.	
13.	Standards & Curriculum Committee 13.1 Minutes from 13th May 2025 Chair of Committee to outline any additional points and take questions- The Chair of the Committee provided an update on several key areas and highlighted that SEND continued to be a significant concern, due to the high level of need and ongoing challenges with the local authority. Staff sickness, particularly extended sick leave, had also impacted provision, leading to the closure of some services. This, combined with pressures on timetabling across schools, had further strained resources. The Chair of the Committee said that despite these challenges, there were positives. She noted the enthusiasm of the presenting teachers, especially in contrast to the otherwise difficult context. PE provision stood out as particularly strong, with excellent feedback from pupils. Children had spoken positively about opportunities to collaborate with other schools and try new activities, which had been a source of excitement and pride. 13.2 Local Boards Main issues drawn from the S&CC meeting Part II was taken	
14.	External Inspection Reports (circulated to the Trustees prior to the meeting) OfSTED: Landscope Church of England school- Final report The Chair highlighted the positive report for Landscope's recent Ofsted visit. There were no comments brought forward.	
15.	Governance 15.1 Update – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP to update re progress of reappointment of Paul Waterworth as Foundation Director- The Chair informed the Trustees that PW's reappointment had now been approved by EDEN. • Chair to summarise any changes or appointments of Trustees and Governors. - The Chair and the GP updated the meeting, informing Trustees that several governance changes had taken place. Moorland LAC	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new parent governor for Bearnese- Charlotte Vickery-Ward had joined. • Richard Nutbeam, previously the parent governor for Wolborough, had transitioned to become the Foundation Governor for Wolborough. As a result, a new parent governor was needed for Wolborough, as well as a Foundation Governor for Ilminster. <p><u>Totnes LAC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Jones had been appointed as the new Chair for the Totnes LAC and had held his first meeting the previous week. <p><u>East Devon LAC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Houston had been appointed as the new parent governor for Drakes. However, parent governors were still needed for Littleham, Farway, and Branscombe- a Foundation Governor was still required for all the new East Devon schools. • Reverend Lewis from Woodbury was expected to take on a Foundation Governor role, though his specific placement had yet to be confirmed. The next step was to formally bring him on board and then determine his responsibilities. <p>15.2 Update on the East Devon LAC- The Governance Professional noted that there was still work to be done, but it was in hand. She highlighted the recent LAC meeting had been well attended.</p> <p>15.3 Any outstanding LAC issues to be discussed- There were no issues raised.</p>	
16.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>16.1 GS to update meeting on safeguarding across the Trust- GS noted that there had been a few anomalies in the recent Safeguarding report, particularly regarding pupil numbers. There was some uncertainty about whether early childhood or preschool figures had been included. He explained that the report still appeared to be coming from Academy heads rather than directly from CPOMs, indicating that further work was needed. One specific issue highlighted was the BPRI (bullying, prejudice, racism incidents), which had been almost non-existent and significantly fewer than in the previous report. GS said that he felt that the reports were improving but acknowledged that they were still in a transitional phase.</p> <p>16.2 CEO to update on any specific matters to note</p> <p>The CEO commented further on the Safeguarding report and noted that she and the DoS (Director of Safeguarding) had also reviewed the report together, examining each column closely. They found that while some data was accurate, others were not. One notable discrepancy was a figure showing 104 pupils at a school, when in fact there were only 88. This inflated number appeared to result from the system not removing pupils who had left, and from including nursery children who should not have been counted in the same way.</p> <p>The CEO explained that the data pulled from CPOMS was not always updated correctly, and that inconsistencies arose when children moved schools or left. She added that, the system sometimes duplicated entries due to minor differences in name formatting, such as capitalisation. She planned to address this and would be delivering training to Academy heads in June to improve data accuracy. They also discussed the importance of maintaining accurate records in SIMS. Some headteachers were diligent in updating records, while others were not.</p>	

	Regarding BPRI (bullying, prejudice, racism incidents), only one incident had been recorded, which was considered unrealistic. It was noted that only incidents formally reported to the local authority were being captured, missing the more frequent, lower-level issues that also needed to be documented. The team acknowledged this gap and intended to improve how such incidents were recorded and reported. The CEO said that the EIT planned to move these actions forward, with GS continuing discussions with the DoS to support the improvements.	
17.	Health and Safety 17.1 CEO to report any issues to note There were no issues brought forward.	
18.	Policies for approval The following policies have been reviewed and updated and are presented for approval: 18.1 Standards & Curriculum Committee 18.2 School complaints- Following the release of new guidance, this policy was due to be re-drafted by the DCEO/GP and would be carried forward to the next meeting. 18.3 Public sector equality statement for publication (Diversity Policy)- The Trustees approved the Public sector Policy. 18.2 Finance & General Purposes Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 18.3 Remuneration Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 18.4 Audit Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 18.4 Admissions Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 18.5 Full Board Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None <u>ACTION-</u> DCEO and the GP to re-draft the school complaints Policy following the newly issued guidance.	DCEO/GP
19.	Review of Risk register RAG ratings Meeting to revisit RAG ratings following discussions and agree any changes necessary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust Growth- The Trustees agreed that Trust Growth should remain green rated. Reputation and Competition- The Trustees agreed for Reputation and Competition to remain amber rated as due to unrest amongst the parent bodies over restructuring this remained an active risk. Governance- The Trustees agreed for Governance to remain amber rated as there were still some governor vacancies on the East Devon LAC and recruitment needed for additional Trustees. Policy management- The Trustees agreed for Policy management to remain green rated. Financial management- The Trustees agreed that due to current financial concerns, financial management should remain red rated. Going Concern- The Trustees agreed that Going concern should also remain red rated in line with the above. 	
20.	Evaluation of governance impact The meeting agreed the meeting had been impactful.	

The meeting ended at 5.47pm

Signed by the Chair of the

Committee.....