

THE SPRING PARTNERSHIP TRUST
Final adopted minutes of a meeting of the Trustees
held at The Warren at 7pm on Thursday 14th September 2023

Present:

Mr R Barlow, from minute 4
Mr A Blount
Mr J Cliff, Chair
Mr M Ellis
Mr B James

In attendance:

Mrs G Sesli, Acting Joint CEO
Mrs C Sheehan, Acting Joint CEO
Mrs V Bolton, COO
Mrs S Sayed, Temporary Clerk

1. Elections and appointments

- 1.1 The re-appointments of K Crossley as Clerk to Trustees and V Bolton as Company Secretary were approved by Trustees, effective immediately. Trustees thanked Mrs Sayed for clerking the meeting at short notice.
- 1.2 Trustees approved the appointments of J Cliff as Chair of Trustees and D Terry as Vice Chair.
- 1.3 The Chair reported that Ms Barenbrug had resigned with immediate effect. Recruitment would begin for a new Trustee with finance skills. **KC to action.**

2. Apologies for absence, welcome and pecuniary interests

- 2.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Cartwright and Mr Terry. No apologies had been received from Mrs Sandigurskaia and Mrs Brookman.

3. Declaration of pecuniary interests

- 3.1 None.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

- 4.1 The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of 18th July 2023 were approved by Trustees and signed by the Chair.
- 4.2 The majority of matters arising from the meeting of 18th July 2023 had been completed, and outstanding actions had been diarised for completion.

5. Executive team reporting

- 5.1 Trustees were referred to the Executive report. It was reported that there had been a strong start to the new academic year, with on-going emphasis on the Trust's vision and values and a celebration of working within the Trust. Positive feedback had been received by staff.
- 5.2 The Trust had received confirmation that there was no RAAC in Hayes Primary School, Elmstead Wood Primary School and St Mary Cray Primary Academy. It was thought to

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not be present at Midfield Primary School but further investigations were needed in areas with restricted access. The Trust was waiting on confirmation of the date for the RAAC survey at Leasons Primary School next week.

5.3 Quality of Education was a success story across the Trust. Investment in EYFS and KS1 had been a driver for closing gaps. Staff development continued to reflect professional growth, which was now in its third year. Support staff would be motivated to develop and grow.

5.4 There were no questions from Trustees on the monthly management accounts to June 2023, which had previously been circulated by email. The SRMA had also been finalised with no changes to the draft. The Chair of Trustees had approved changes to the Budget Forecast Return (BFR) following the auditor's review and these were highlighted in the executive report. This had resulted in a reduced deficit of £254k.

5.4. Consolidated Strategic Plan 2022/23

5.4.1 Trustees were referred to the Consolidated Strategic Plan 2022/23 and commentary was provided as follows:

5.4.2 The number of pupils with SEND remained a challenge for the Trust. Following the restructure of support staff, who work with SENCOs and senior leadership teams to support the delivery of EHC plans, the effectiveness of the impact of support staff would continue to be reviewed. **GS to action.** Workshops for support staff would be run to improve understanding of the sequencing of the curriculum. A Trustee suggested that consideration be given to creating a bank of curriculum videos and on-line quizzes to improve understanding of the sequencing. **GS to action.** A discussion took place on whether teachers may need support and training on how to deploy adults in the classroom effectively. It was noted that SENDCos worked effectively on effective deployment of staff, but that this support would be considered. **GS to action.**

5.4.3 Discussions on the expansion plan for the ARP provision at Midfield Primary School were progressing, with recent visits from architects, structural engineers and Rob Bollen, Head of Strategic Place Planning for the Local Authority. The Tree House Leader was actively involved in staff development, funding applications and the expansion of Tree House.

5.4.4 Quality of education is improving across the Trust as a result of investing time on improving the curriculum. The investments made in EYFS and KS1, with phonics, reading materials and CPD is having a significant impact and outcomes by the end of KS1 appear to be closing.

5.4.5 Midfield Primary School and Elmstead Wood Primary School are now in the Ofsted window. Leasons could be re-inspected by May 2024.

5.4.6 Professional Growth (PG) is in its third year of development. There is better understanding amongst leaders of how to implement PG cycles which include monitoring and having dialogue about individual career opportunities. This has been stronger with teachers and there is a big push this year to develop our support staff so that they too feel motivated to grow professionally. Subject knowledge would continue to be developed across the Trust, with SLIM leaders meeting 6 times/year and developing pedagogy.

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- 5.4.7 Peer reviews had been systematically conducted in AY22/23, but a more personalised approach was offered to Heads for AY23/24. For example, the Headteacher at Midfield Primary School had requested a 'Mocksted' to prepare for inspection.
- 5.4.8 The Trust remained committed to its work on EDI, which was on-going and maintaining momentum.
- 5.4.9 Regular team forums had been set up for groups of staff, such as SENDCos, admin teams and facilities teams. Networks were a real strength of the Trust.
- 5.4.10 The EYFS investment plan introduced to Trustees in January 2023 detailing investment in indoor and outdoor settings was underway, with significant work having taken place at the nursery at EWPS. The commitment to this plan was on-going. The Trust was mindful of maintaining indoor and outdoor assets, which were attractive to families.

6. Trust Committee Business

- 6.1. There were no Committee minutes to consider.
- 6.2 Discussion had been held at the re-scheduled ACC meeting on 13th September 2023 on the Digital Strategy. The Trust continued to invest in and replenish the Digital Strategy, including the use of Chrome books.

7. Trustee training

- 7.1 Trustees were reminded to read and confirm they had read the relevant parts of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023/24 on the Knowledge Bank, and to complete the annual Educare Child Protection Refresher online training as a matter of priority.

8. Growth Update

- 8.1 This item was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 1.

9. Policies

- 9.1 The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2023/24 was approved.

10. AOB and date of next meeting

- 10.1 The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 6th December 2023 14th at 7 pm at The Warren. Calendar invites would be circulated to Trustees. **KC to action.**
- 10.2 The clerk would circulate dates for Trustees to visit schools. **KC to action.**
- 10.3 Trustees were invited to attend the Trust Conference on the morning of 24th November 2023.

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- 10.4 A meeting would be arranged between Brian James and the TSPT HR Team Manager as part of an induction to Trust HR processes. **CS to action.**

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Signed:Date:.....