

THE SPRING PARTNERSHIP TRUST
Final adopted minutes of a meeting of the Directors
held at Hayes Primary School at 7.00pm on Monday 21st May 2018

Present:

Mr C Lees (Chair)
Mrs J Brinkley (CEO)
Dr I Raitt
Miss R Punter
Mrs C Cousins
Mrs B Simpson, (until minute 7.1.2
and for minute 9)
Mr R Taylor
Mr D Okafor (until minute 7.2.2)
Mrs L Falk
Mrs J Tibbalds

In attendance:

Mrs G Sesli, Acting EHT (LPS and MPS), until minute 7.1.2
Mrs C Sheehan, CFO Manager
Mrs V Bolton, Trust Services
Mr J England, Data Protection Officer, until minute 4

Clerk:

Miss K Crossley

1. Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from J Cliff.
- 1.2 Directors were satisfied with the reason given for absence, and accepted the apologies.
- 1.3 The meeting was quorate.
- 1.4 Directors welcomed L Falk, D Okafor and J Tibbalds, who had recently been appointed to the Board. Introductions were made.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

- 2.1 No pecuniary interests were declared.

3. GDPR/Data Protection

3.1 GDPR update

- 3.1.1 J England, Data Protection Officer (DPO), was welcomed to the meeting and invited to report on the recent audit of two Trust schools and progress towards demonstrating commitment to GDPR compliance. The role of the DPO in representing the rights of data subjects and working alongside the Trust to implement GDPR was outlined (appendices 1 and 2).
- 3.1.2 A discussion followed on GDPR compliance and it was explained that the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) expect organisations to be able to demonstrate commitment and aspiration to GDPR compliance. Organisations would have a 72 hour window in which to report breaches and an opportunity to demonstrate that they had taken all possible measures to avoid breaches by providing evidence of adherence to policies and procedures. Fines were only expected to be issued as a last resort in cases of negligence.
- 3.1.3 Implementation workshops for staff would be held covering all aspects of data processing, including ICO guidelines, the basis of retention of data, subject access requests and the right to be forgotten. Directors asked whether systems were in place to respond to subject access requests, and was advised that this was the case. A route for processing central Trust access requests would also be established. **VB to action.** In the event of a large number of subject access requests being received immediately following the introduction of GDPR, an extension to standard processing times would be sought from the ICO.

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- 3.1.4 Directors asked about the accountability of the DPO and were advised that there would be a reporting line to the Board of Directors, with the DPO attending one meeting annually. Clarification would be sought as to whether an independent reporting line to the Chair should be established.
- 3.1.5 In response to a question as to whether data subjects could request that data be retained once a pupil had left the school, for example, by parents who had siblings on roll, it was explained that the Trust would continue to adhere to IMRS data retention schedule, which was recognised nationally. Going forward, consideration would be given to drafting a bespoke Trust schedule to ensure that all data strands, including HR, were covered. **VB to action.**
- 3.16 Directors asked about the DPO's initial impressions following visits to two Trust schools. It was reported that the use of unencrypted data sticks and working from home had been identified as areas of concern. **VB to action.** Directors considered to how effect a cultural shift whereby all members of staff would be aware of their individual and collective responsibility for preventing breaches. It was noted that the e-safety policy had been revised to take account of the introduction of GDPR (see minute 13.2.1) and that it was now a requirement that all staff, Directors and Local Committee members (LCMs) complete an on-line GDPR training module. **VB to action.** Regular reminders would be issued on adopting good habits, such as not leaving computer screens unlocked or printed papers on shared printers. **VB to action.** It was agreed that existing procedures associated with areas such as safeguarding and IT would continue to be reviewed from the perspective of GDPR requirements on an ongoing basis. **VB to action.**
- 3.17 It was agreed that a written report on the audit of all schools would be circulated to Directors before the end of the summer term. **DPO to action.** It was further agreed that the addition of GDPR as a standing agenda item for all Board and Local Committee meetings would be added to the Business Planner. **CL to action.**

3.2 DPO function

- 3.2.1 This matter had been discussed in minute 3.1.1.

3.3 Data Protection Policy

- 3.3.1 Directors were referred to the revised Data Protection Policy (appendix 3). In response to a question about the GDPR implications for the Trust of photos and/or videos taken by parents at school events being posted on social media, it was confirmed that this would not constitute a breach as the Trust was not in control of the photos and/or videos.
- 3.3.2 The policy was approved with minor amendments.
- 3.3.3 Directors thanked the DPO for having attended the meeting.

4. Board Business

- 4.1 The appointments of D Okafor, L Falk, J Tibbalds and J Martin to the Board of Directors were noted.
- 4.2 The terms of office of all Directors were noted.

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5. Minutes of previous meeting

5.1 The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of 8th February 2018 (appendix 4) were approved by the Board and signed by the Chair.

5.2 Directors were referred to the matters arising report (appendix 5) detailing actions which had been completed and the status of outstanding actions as follows:

5.2, 12.10 Equality action plan

In response to a question as to progress in revising the equalities action plan, it was confirmed that work had been undertaken by SENCOs on the TSPT equality objectives from the perspective of pupils, and that corporate input had been received from R Punter. The equality report and draft equality action plan would be brought to the Board meeting in July 2018. **VB & RP to action.**

5.2, 9.2 Catering contract

The monitoring of uptake of school meals under the new catering contract would be considered at FARCO meetings. **Clerk to action.**

6. Chair's report

6.1 Directors were referred to the Chair's report (appendix 6). The Chair advised that following recent changes to Board membership, Director roles were under review and would be communicated in due course. Questions were invited on the report.

6.2 A discussion followed on the intention to phase out dual roles at both board and local level held by some Directors. It was noted that this arrangement had previously offered an effective channel of communication with local committees, and it was proposed that this function would be covered in future by the establishment of strong Link Director roles. Local Committee members' practical knowledge of local governance was acknowledged, and it was suggested that inviting Local Committee members to observe Board meetings would strengthen understanding of the Trust and offer insight in local committee business. Consideration would be given to what information Directors should receive from local committees; it was recognised that this would vary from school to school, but that in some areas, such as academic data, consistency of reporting was essential. The Chairs of Local Committees would be consulted as to appropriate reporting to Directors, with a view to strategy for governance being updated. **CL to action.**

7. Trust Development

7.1 CEO Report (appendices 5-13)

7.1.1 Overview of key issues

7.1.1.1 Directors were referred to the CEO report (appendix 7) and its appendices (appendices 8 and 9), reminded of the Trust's strategic aims and updated on progress towards these. Issues relating to KPI reporting had been addressed by the purchase of software which would enable meaningful and accurate reporting in a standardised format from September 2018. The Trust was working towards an integrated curriculum which would increase the reliability of judgements. From September 2018, SIMS and Target Tracker would be populated in all schools and the Lessons Learned performance management software would be used to support teacher development. The CEO was confident that these tools would enable to headteachers to be held to account every six weeks for pupils' progress

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and attainment, and that any support required to address gaps could be brokered within the Trust.

- 7.1.1.2 Directors were concerned to ensure that apparent anomalies in the submission of KPIs were identified and resolved to ensure confidence in the data. It was explained that it had taken time to diagnose the barriers to reporting reliable data, which was an issue for all primary MATs, and that these would be addressed through the use of the new software and staff training across the Trust.
- 7.1.1.3 It was reported that the building work at CPS was close to completion, with pupils to begin using the new facilities after the May half-term break. Teacher recruitment at CPS continued to be challenging although several NQTs had been recruited. The Trust would run an NQT induction programme for all 8 NQTs in 2018/19, which would include opportunities to help them integrate and spend times at each other's schools. The maternity leave of the DHT would be covered by the current AHT, who would be based out of class and lead on teaching and learning. A member of staff from another Trust school had been seconded to CPS to cover the safeguarding and attendance element of the DHT role. Two strong teachers who had previously worked in schools with a similar context had been given additional responsibility to work at Trust level on maths and English.
- 7.1.1.3 Teaching vacancies at HPS had been successfully filled by NQTs and teachers with 2-3 years of experience; career progression would be offered by the Middle Leader Programme, which was expected to support staff retention. Generally within the Trust, retention of teaching staff was recognised as important and work was in hand to further improve the 'employment experience'.
- 7.1.1.4 Directors were informed that an Ofsted inspection would be due at DRIS in one year. Insufficient pupil numbers and transition to KS2 were key concerns; it had been noted that some pupils struggled to maintain their KS1 progress on transition to KS2 in the larger setting of CPS. In addition, some families whose eldest children had attended DRIS were applying for younger siblings to enter EYFS at CPS due to the distance between the two schools. Careful consideration would be given to these issues.
- 7.1.1.5 Teacher recruitment was underway at LPS, the Head of School would be in place full time from September 2018, accountable to the EHT. The development of a nursery was under consideration, subject to resolution of practical issues, such as the need to recruit staff before all places were filled. Directors asked what would be required for LPS to retain its 'Good' judgement and were informed that a higher proportion of 'Good' teaching would be essential; this was expected to be the case in 2018/19. Directors inquired whether the school would be subject to additional scrutiny as a result of the SATs maladministration, and was advised that a section 5 inspection would be triggered if the KS2 results were not good. The 2017/18 KS2 results were expected to be below the national level as a result of the difficulties arising recently, but leadership capacity was in place to ensure that this would be promptly addressed.
- 7.1.1.6 Following recent resignations and secondments, there would be a completely new senior leadership team at SMCPA. Work was underway to ensure that the new Head of School would be appropriately supported, and consideration would be given to secondments from other schools if required. Directors were concerned to ensure that the strong Ofsted judgements at SMCPA and other Trust schools were not jeopardised, and noted the potential risks associated with a high level of reliance on internal secondments. Concern was also expressed at the risk to safeguarding at SMCPA, with the loss of two key senior members of the safeguarding team. It was confirmed that recruitment was underway for the family worker role, and that the EHT structure offered opportunities to centralise

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practice and processes and raise standards. The support provided by MPS to LPS in 2017/18 had demonstrated the value of moving staff within the Trust, and a similar approach would be adopted at SMCPA.

7.1.2 Review any strategic developments

7.1.2.1 Directors were informed that the Trust had been offered a MAT development grant to bring two new schools into the Trust by the end of March 2019. This was an indication of the confidence of the Regional Schools Commissioner in the Trust's ability to transform the lives of children. It was proposed that opportunities to work with local schools and/or clusters of schools be explored, with a view to conducting risk assessments and reporting back to the Director of Education at the borough.

7.1.2.2 Directors expressed concern that the grant may not be sufficient to integrate two schools. A thorough strategic review would be conducted and the matter would be discussed at the next meeting. **JB to action.**

7.1.3 Review of SATs 2018

7.1.3.1 There had been a focus on promoting a culture of honesty and integrity for the administration of the KS2 SATs in 2018. Up-to-date training materials had been produced and circulated for use in each school. All staff and LCms involved in the administration of SATs had been trained and assemblies had been held at all schools to ensure that pupils were informed about what to expect during the SAT administration process and about the whistleblowing policy. Parents were also briefed. During SATs week, LCM visits had been undertaken at all schools, including the use of a checklist to ensure that all standards had been met. To emphasise the importance of maintaining integrity of the SATS the Chair of Directors conducted a monitoring visit on the first test day at LPS. In response to a question from Directors, it was confirmed that all Trust schools had been fully compliant with standards. The local authority had conducted visits at LPS, CPS and SMCPA and had reported that standards had been very high.

7.1.4 Presentation by Acting EHT of LPS, MPS and SMCPA

7.1.4.1 The Acting EHT of LPS, MPS and SMCPA reported to Directors on the 'back to basics' approach which had been adopted at LPS since September 2017 to drive school improvement, including building leadership capacity, establishing lines of accountability, setting up systems and routines for teaching, learning, assessment, behaviour and safeguarding. Work had been undertaken to improve the culture of the school, resulting in increased openness and clarity of vision amongst staff, which would be key to improving outcomes. Performance management had been significantly strengthened. Staff training had been rolled out, and collaboration with other Trust schools, including mentoring, had been effective.

7.1.4.2 It was reported that the key risks identified by the EHT structure were retention of the 'Outstanding' grading at MPS, staffing at SMCPA following resignations and the very tight recruitment market. With regard to SMCPA staffing, the EHT had reassured staff that careful consideration had been given to the smooth transition to the new Head of School, who would begin spending time regularly in school from June 2018 to ensure a thorough handover with the current headteacher, and who would be supported by senior leaders from the 3 schools. There would also be increased visibility of Trust staff. The Acting EHT had implemented steps to enhance retention of current staff.

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7.1.4.3 In response to a question from Directors, it was confirmed that the Acting EHT and the CFO were working together to ensure that appropriate financial controls were in place across LPS, MPS and SMCPA.

7.2 CFO/HR Report

7.2.1 Finance overview

7.2.1.1 Directors were referred to the CFO report (appendix 10) and informed that the finance function had been centralised and an integrated financial package was in use. Issues relating to incorrect formula in the financial software had been largely resolved. Regular meetings with school staff were held to ensure adherence to financial procedures. The budget setting process for 2018/19 was underway, with involvement from Local Committee Chairs and headteachers. All schools would be expected to set a balanced budget. A budget forecast return would be submitted to the ESFA by the end of July 2018.

7.2.1.2 Directors noted that the decision to increase PAN at SMCPA had not been effective as the second form of entry would not be required in September 2018. The funding issues associated with the loss of the bulge class in 2019/20, had still therefore to be addressed and directors were concerned to ensure alternative funding options were explored. It was agreed that a feasibility study for an in-house nursery would be completed as a matter of urgency. **CS to action.**

7.2.1.3 Procurement at Trust level was on-going, with work underway on cleaning and grounds maintenance contracts to achieve economies of scale. Directors were referred to the list of savings achieved to date on p2 of the CFO report.

7.2.2 This item was deemed to be confidential, see confidential minute 15.1.

7.3 Trust Services Manager Report (appendix 11)

The Trust Services Manager report was received for information.

7.3.1 Contracts update

7.3.3.1 It was confirmed that additional clauses would be added to contracts with Trust suppliers which were not yet compliant with GDPR. **VB to action.**

7.3.2 Risk Register

7.3.2.1 Directors considered risks 1 to 6 in the Risk Register (appendix 12). No changes were made to the likelihood and impact of risks 1 to 6. Suggested rewording of risk 6 would be emailed to the Trust Services Manager. **RT to action.**

7.3.3 IT strategy

7.3.3.1 It was confirmed that a trust-wide audit of IT hardware was underway and the information compiled would be used to compile a risk register to inform the timing of IT investment. An IT Strategic Plan would be brought for review following the next meeting of the IT Strategic working party. **VB to action.**

7.3.4 Critical issues update

7.3.4.1 There were no questions from Directors on the critical issues schedule (appendix 13). It was agreed that an internal investigation relating to lack of adherence to the purchase order

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procedure at LPS would be added to the critical issues schedule (see minute 8.2.1). **Clerk to action.**

7.3.5 Equality update and report from Equality Director

7.3.5.1 This item had been discussed under minute 5.2, 12.10.

7.3.6 Review governance training

7.3.6.1 It was confirmed that following a review of the uptake of training, the contract with Bexley council would not be renewed. Directors and LCms would have opportunities to keep their training up to date through TSPT Breakfast Briefings, Educare on-line modules and two bespoke training sessions provided by Octavo. New Directors and LCms would be required to complete governance induction training.

8. Report from FARCO

8.1 Minutes of meetings of November 2017 and February 2018

8.1.1 The minutes of FARCO meetings of 27th November and 5th February 2018 (appendices 14 and 15) were received for information.

8.2 Overview of key issues

8.2.1 The Chair of FARCO reported on recent FARCO business, including an internal investigation by the Chair of the LPS Local Committee into the purchase of office furniture, the order for which had been placed without appropriate approval.

8.2.2 FARCO had rejected a request to install a log cabin to be used as a library at MPS on the basis of lack of adherence to the spend request procedure and the lack of pedagogical justification. The Acting EHT had been invited to present the business case, including the expected impact on outcomes, at the next FARCO meeting.

8.2.3 FARCO had considered the accounting of donations from third parties to the Music Hub fundraising and was satisfied that donations were being posted to a separate account. It had also been agreed that donors would be made aware that, in the event of the project not proceeding, donations would be posted to the general PTA account. Fundraising for the Music Hub would continue to be monitored.

8.2.4 The CFO reported that the signature requirements under the Financial Scheme of Delegation required amendment and it was agreed that a revised scheme would be agreed by FARCO and would be brought for approval at the next meeting of the Trust Board. **CS to action.**

8.2.5 It was agreed that the internal audit report dated March 2018 would be circulated to Directors. **Clerk to action.**

8.3 Consider and approve any spend requests over £20,000.

8.3.1 The request to refurbish the KS2 boys' and girls' toilets at HPS, at a cost of £49,263 to be funded from the operating surplus and unrestricted reserves, had been recommended by FARCO for approval by Directors. In response to a question from Directors, it was

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confirmed that there sufficient provision for disabled pupils in both the boys' and girls' toilets. The request was approved by Directors.

9. Report from Achievement and Curriculum Committee

9.1 Minutes of meeting of 13th December 2018

9.1.1 There were no questions from Directors on the minutes of the meeting of the Achievement and Curriculum Committee on 13th December 2018 (appendix 16).

9.2 Overview of key issues

9.1.2 The Chair of ACC updated Directors on discussions at the meeting ACC meeting held in April 2018, at which the Committee had requested analysis of the gender gap in academic performance. A two-year action plan to address the gender gap would be drawn up and monitored by the Committee. Progress had been made in improving the collation of academic data at Trust level, and further improvements were expected with the introduction of software as well as quality assurance by headteachers. The Committee had noted its concern regarding outcomes and teaching standards at CPS, and had welcomed the introduction of robust systems for regular monitoring of Trust-level data, through which areas of concern would be identified and improvement driven.

10. Administration

10.1 Membership at schools and TSPT committees

10.1.1 Directors were referred to the updated Board and Committee membership (appendix 17). On the recommendation of the Chair of the LPS Local Committee, Directors approved the renewal of E Bromfield's term of office for a further four years from 1 April 2018. The appointment of M Fabian to the CPS Local Committee was approved.

11. Safeguarding

11.1 Safeguarding report

11.1.1 It was confirmed that there were no significant safeguarding issues at any Trust schools.

11.2 Safeguarding and progress of dual-roll pupils

11.2.1 Directors were informed that headteachers monitored the safeguarding and of progress of dual-roll pupils through visits to alternative provision. The Chair would liaise with the Chairs of Local Committees to ensure that monitoring was undertaken from a governance perspective. **CL to action.**

12. Health and Safety Update

12.1 It was reported that regular meetings were held with the Local Committee Health and Safety Accountability Group, and that twice-yearly visits were undertaken, including classroom assessments, the reports for which were discussed at Local Committee meetings. A network group for site staff had been established, and key members of staff

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were required to complete the health and safety module on Educare. Plans were in place for staff to complete a quiz on key information in the Health & Safety policy. **VB to action.**

- 12.2 A discussion followed on how to establish a culture of awareness of health and safety, for example through standardising language to ensure that everyone in Trust schools was following the same principles. Plans were in place for staff to be given a flash card with key health and safety 'dos and don'ts' on one side and GDPR 'dos and don'ts' on the other. Directors inquired whether all schools had a staff handbook, and were informed that this was the case in some schools, and that the Trust Staff Code of Conduct referenced health and safety matters. It was suggested that information on health and safety, GDPR and other key information be collated into one handbook for all staff, backed up by reference to statutory policies. **VB to action.**
- 12.3 Directors thanked the Trust Services Manager for the progress in improving health and safety accountability across the Trust.

13. Policies

13.1 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- 13.1.1 The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (appendix 18) had been reviewed in the light of recommendations arising from staff training. Confirmation would be sought from the DPO that the provision for recording of data as required by the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and all other policies was compliant with GDPR. **VB to action.**
- 13.1.2 The revised policy was approved, subject to any changes to account for malicious allegations against peers that might be required and which would be agreed at the next meeting. **VB to action.**

13.2 E-safety (Acceptable Use) Policy

- 13.2.1 The E-Safety (Acceptable Use) policy (appendix 19) was approved.

13.3 Photographs and Video

- 13.3.1 The Photographs and Video Policy (appendix 20) was approved.

14. AOB and date of next meeting

- 14.1 The meeting closed at 9:30 pm.
- 14.2 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 5th July at 7:30pm SMCPA, following the Spring 2018 Success Celebration, for which an invitation would be circulated shortly.

Signed:
Clive Lees, Chair of Directors

Date:.....

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Minutes might be confidential for the following reasons:-

- a) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office, or a pupil or their family;
- b) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
- c) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Trust and its employees;
- d) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Trust;
- e) action being taken to prevent or detect crime to prosecute offenders;
- f) the source of information given to the Trust in confidence; or
- g) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Trust's functions.