



**Minutes of the St Teresa of Calcutta MAC Board Meeting held on
Thursday 7th December 2023 at 1.00pm at Archbishop Ilsey Catholic School**

Present: Frances McGarry, Foundation Director, Chair
Mary A Mills, Foundation Director (MM)
Mary Higgins, Foundation Director (MH)
Sean Devlin, Foundation Director (SD) Vice Chair
Andrew Kennedy, Foundation Director (AK)
Christopher Price, Foundation Director (CP)
David Whale, Co-Opted Director, (DW)

Apologies: Susan Hughes, Co-Opted Director (SH)
Andrew Cullinane, Foundation Director (AC)

In Attendance: Professor Paul Ryan, CSEL
Collette Burge, CFO
Gerardine Lawson-Lotarew, Assist Governance Manager (GP)
Liz Walker, PA to the CSEL (LW)
Sharon Buckley, Observer (SB)

Opening Prayer

STM016/071223 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and invited SB, who was joining the meeting as an observer to provide a summary of her experience and background.

AC had sent apologies and these were accepted. SH sent apologies post meeting and these also were accepted.

STM017/071223 Declarations of Interest

DW declared an interest in Michael Duffy Partnership Limited. No other declarations were received.

STM018/071223 Urgent Additional Items

No urgent additional items were tabled for discussion.

STM019/071223 Membership Update

The membership was reviewed, and the GP highlighted the term of office for AK would end on 3rd May 2024 and DW's term of office would end on 6th July 2024. No other terms of office were due to expire in 2024.

**STM020/071223 Minutes of the previous Trust Board meeting held on 12th October 2023 –
Circulated prior to the meeting**

The minutes from the meeting held on 29th June 2023 were reviewed and no amendments were made. It was

Resolved: *the minutes were approved to be signed by the Chair and retained by the MAC*

ACTIONS:

STM132/200223 Equality Statement – The CSEL reported having spoken to HR and confirmed the MAC would be looking to source another HR service provider. The equality

information had been discussed with HR and it was confirmed the information was basic and this had been late in being sent to the MAC. This information was chased again by the CSEL last week and HR had advised the CSEL they were currently too busy to be able to provide the information. The Chair reiterated this was a requirement and was concerned about the absence of this information particularly in relation to the information for the lowest and highest paid staff. This was basic information that should be provided to the MAC. The CSEL agreed to continue pursuing this information. – Carry Forward

The Chair sought clarification if the information could be sourced elsewhere? The CSEL confirmed this would not be possible. The CFO reported the MAC was looking for a new HR service provider and one of the providers did have the software to provide this information. The Chair requested the Board be kept apprised of developments. MH and CP requested to be involved in any presentations being made by potential new HR service providers. **ACTION: CFO**

The CSEL confirmed the MAC was required to give six months' notice to Birmingham HR to end the contract.

- STM132/200423** Equality Statement – Carry forward
- STM147/290623** CSEL Report – Closed
- STM152/290623** Policies – Closed
- STM006/120123** Business Interests Forms – Closed
- STM006/120123** Related Party Transactions – Closed
- STM006/120123** Diversity Data – Closed
- STM006/120123** Pay Data – Carry forward
- STM006/120123** Code of Conduct – Closed
- STM006/120123** Website requirements – Closed
- STM006/120123** Skills Audit – Closed
- STM006/120123** Trustee Contact Details – Closed
- STM009/121023** Minutes 29.06.23 – Included on the agenda
- STM010/121023** CSEL Report – This matter had been discussed at the Resources Committee – Closed
- STM015/121023** Monitoring Visits BDES – This would be included on the Board agendas. Closed

STM021/071223 Chairs Urgent Actions

The Chair reported the following:

- The Chair reported a meeting had been held with the local governing board Chairs.
- The Chair also reported there had been a meeting with the external adviser in relation to the CSEL performance review. The interim review meeting took place in August.
- Work had been completed at the Rosary which had been initiated from the safeguarding review. Feedback would be provided on 19.12.23 at 3.45pm when the final report would be available. The Chair suggested it would therefore be useful if the Directors could join this meeting either virtually or at the Rosary. Directors would hear from the person undertaking the review and it would be appropriate for Directors to be briefed in preparation for any future inspection.

STM022/071223 Terms of Reference – Circulated prior to the meeting

The terms of reference were reviewed for the Resources and Standards Committees and one alteration was requested to the Standards Committee terms of reference to clarify meetings were held termly. There being no questions it was

Resolved: *the terms of reference for the Resources and Standards Committees were approved subject to the one amendment.*

STM023/071223 **Receive Committee Minutes** – *Circulated prior to the meeting*

The committee minutes were received and there being no questions it was

Resolved: *the Standards and Resources Committee minutes were accepted.*

STM024/071223 **CSEL Report** – *Papers circulated prior to the meeting*

The CSEL referred Directors to the report and highlighted the following:

- Page 2 New research into centralisation and GAG pooling Research by CST Platinum Partner CJK Associates and community supporter IMP Software was exploring how trusts were evolving their approach to centralisation and GAG pooling. The Trust could take part by completing a survey and share experiences around what it was doing, what worked well and what could be done differently if the opportunity was available.
- Page 2 Fall in birth rate - implications. The report gave an example of the projections provided by Birmingham City Council for Holy Souls. This presented a challenge for all MAC primary schools and secondary schools in the future. The MAC was developing a strategic approach that would include a marketing and recruitment plan which would prescribe an approach to hopefully, mitigate the impact across the MAC. The CSEL added the MAC was working with the University of Derby in relation to recruitment. The CSEL had approached two catholic universities, but they were unable to assist.

A Director referred to the marketing and recruitment and the tables within the report suggesting this was a short timeframe for 2026-2027 with a 14% drop. There was a concern within the catholic sector about the lower numbers of catholic children in terms of birth rate and practicing Catholics. The Director suggested the MAC needed to look at the space in schools and how this could be effectively utilised. There was not a lot of time and discussions were taking place amongst other catholic consortiums. The CSEL suggested the concern was there would be several 1 joining the MAC who would be in a similar position, and it was necessary to have the conversation and some schools. The CSEL highlighted some schools in Solihull were looking at becoming resource centres.

A Director suggested the diocese should be involved with this. The Chair reminded members that there had been discussions at previous meetings about strategic planning with support from the diocese. This was also agreed as an issue for action, at the monitoring meeting. Holy Souls had acted strategically, and pro-actively as demographic change came quickly. Future impact on Secondary schools should be considered. The CSEL confirmed that work had begun around student numbers and staffing ratio.

A Director suggested that a single analysis was what the diocese did with local churches as numbers had been dropping. This was not only children but the overall policy of how schools manage the issue. The Board needed to be ahead of this and know what it would do. The Chair agreed and added that pupil place planning should be included within the three year within the strategic plan. **ACTION: CSEL**

- The CSEL referred Directors to pages 4, 5 and IT. ***A Director sought clarification what was happening in schools with attendance.*** The CSEL reported there was the first attendance conference on 6th December 2023 and an action plan was being prepared which would be tabled at the next board meeting. **ACTION: CSEL**
- The CSEL confirmed staff were being recruited to support IT.
- The pay award for both Teaching and Support staff had now been agreed and the MAC had implemented the national pay awards. Support staff backpay was paid in November 2023 and backdated to April 2023. The teaching staff would be paid the arrears in December 2023 backdated to September 2023.
- Additional support had been put in place for The Rosary and Archbishop IIsley. The strategic school improvement lead was working with St Josephs in preparation for OFSTED.

- Page 7 Strategic Plan Tracker – The CSEL reported a meeting had taken place and a summary of actions was included in the report.

A Director reported they had attended the SEND meeting which had been positive across the key areas. An independent external review of SEN would start next term, the adviser would be Kate Browning who was an SEN expert. All primaries plus a CARITAS primary school had teamed up in pairs so the SENCOS would team up as pairs and visit other schools with Kate to look at practices and share best practice and areas for development, this would start on 30.1.2024. The job description for the strategic inclusion lead had been shared and the MAC wanted someone who would be practical and be able to take a stance with the city and agencies regarding funding.

The Chair referred to language and communication skills and highlighted that SH had previously mentioned this and the use of Teaching Assistants to grow the MAC's own. A Director added the teaching assistants would implement any actions once they had received the professional input. The Chair acknowledged this was important and there were very different levels of need. The CSEL highlighted that one of the reasons for teachers leaving the profession was because they did not feel qualified to deal with this.

A Director noted that in relation to the tracker the board were not receiving progress reports on a termly basis. So, the strategic plan tracker should be presented by the CSEL to the board as part of the main board agenda highlighting the elements the board needed to be aware of. **ACTION: CSEL**

The Chair expressed thanks to the Strategic School Improvement Lead for attending all the local governing board meetings. A Director also requested that thanks was extended to the IT Strategic Lead for the response to the Director in relation to AI.

The Chair raised the issue of the support and preparation for Archbishop Ilsey's next inspection. The school had retained good, but outcomes had declined in the years since the previous inspection. In terms of maths and English it was necessary to show improvement this year. An increasing number of children joined at year 7 not having reached expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and not "secondary ready". Transition arrangements to include "catch up" particularly for those with specific needs should be a high priority. Detailed information was needed of what proportion of children would meet expectations and how pupil premium was being used to support them. Regarding maths, Bishop Challoner Maths Hub had been working with the school and it would be appropriate to clarify what was the brief, what interventions had taken place and how was the impact monitored. The school need to know that the board is confident in their capacity to bring about improvement, despite the challenges. Any external support commissioned by the MAC must provide evidence of impact. The CSEL should provide an update at the next board meeting. **ACTION: CSEL**

STM025/071223 Complete annual accounts process - Papers circulated prior to the meeting

The Chair expressed thanks to the CFO and the team for all the work done to complete this process.

A Director raised a query regarding the actions from the report. In response the CSEL confirmed the report and accounts had been reviewed at the resources committee meeting. The presentation delivered by the auditor had been excellent. The CSEL referred to the levels of reserves and acknowledged this had been attributable to good work by all the schools. Thanks, was also extended to DW for the oversight and work carried out. There being no further questions it was

Resolved: *the audit report and accounts for year ended 31st August 2023 were approved by the board.*

STM026/071223 Inclusion Lead, Job Description and Person Specification for approval – Circulated prior to the meeting

The CSEL reported this role had developed and would not be a 'desk role.' The post was included in the financial forecast. **A Director sought clarification if the MAC was receiving any support in head hunting for the role.** In response the CSEL clarified the MAC was not utilising headhunters, but the

post would be aimed at SENCOS and within local authorities. This was not a teaching post but teaching experience would be desirable as was experience in leading in primary settings. The CSEL was therefore seeking approval of the job description, person specification and for recruitment to the post. There being no questions it was

Resolved: *the Board approved the job description, person specification and recruitment.*

STM027/071223 The Rosary, Safeguarding Report – Circulated prior to the meeting

The Chair thanked the CSEL for sight of the documents and the Chair requested Directors familiarise themselves with the content of the report as part of their duty of oversight. It was appropriate also for the Directors to be able to speak confidently about what had happened and to see all concerns had been addressed at pace. **A Director noted that good things had come forward from the self-assessment. In terms of 'global goals' (page 6), what were these and could this be a model for other things? The Director expressed thanks to the school, and it was good to see the details in terms of the statutory requirements.**

The Chair highlighted the issue of the head teacher and the delegation of workload (page 3). While noting the significant shift towards more distributed leadership and DSL teamwork, it was noted that in some specific safeguarding areas, The Rosary was the only school that did not have two named people trained in all aspects and there was still heavy reliance on the head teacher. The Chair appreciated it would take time to train other staff to further enhance teamwork

A Director highlighted that it had been raised in the document that there was someone available at weekends and school holidays to deal with safeguarding, how could parents access this support ? The CSEL agreed to clarify what the process was. **ACTION: CSEL**

A Director suggested that the DSL needed confidence to know they did not need to put everything through the head teacher. Staff also need confidence they are in control and do not need to raise things with the HT or other DSL.

The Chair expressed thanks on behalf of the board to the Rosary for the work done.

STM028/071223 Environmental Sustainability - Verbal Update

The CSEL reported the template was still outstanding and would be presented to the board once this had been received and completed. This would also require an action plan. **The Chair requested that as previously agreed, this should cover the four C's outlined in the NGA document and that these would be developed in the strategic pillar.**

A Director enquired if the document was mandatory? The Chair clarified that the toolkit would provide an audit of where the MAC was, then the goals, objectives and values would be in the strategic plan and would apply but not be limited by compliance, as care of all creation was central to our mission. **DW left the meeting at 14.30.**

STM029/071223 Trust Board Self-Evaluation - Verbal Update

The Chair thanked MH and the CSEL. The GP had circulated the toolkits and MH and the CSEL had looked at this. This was a draft and a tool to help the Board, and the Board had identified a commercial skills gap on the board, and this had now been filled. There were volunteers for the succession planning for the future and the Board would use the skills audit to identify the skills base.

The Chair referred to the links with the local governing boards and the previous membership of Directors on those Boards which had allowed MAC board members to retain LGB experience. This had now ceased, and Directors no longer served on the local governing boards. Therefore, the CSEL was now meeting with the Chairs of the local governing boards and the agenda for these meetings was driven by the LGBs.

The CSEL reported the Strategic School Improvement Lead and the CFO had attended the meeting with the LGB Chairs and these meetings would provide a forum for incoming Chairs to join. This was an opportunity to talk as a group and discuss key topics.

A Director enquired what topics had been discussed. In response the CSEL highlighted centralising and improving governance in schools, health and safety, wellbeing, and mental health and what was the MAC Board doing. The CFO confirmed there was a lot of information seeking and how we could collaborate regarding finance. The CSEL reported the scheme of delegation was a big agenda item.

The Chair highlighted other issues raised by LGB chairs. Regarding policies, clarification was sought on the process for consultation with head teachers and schools before ratifying. Sight of the management accounts had also been requested, especially of specific savings made when the MAC prescribes a change in procurement or contract. There had been a discussion about governance and communication across the schools with different clerks in place, although schools were happy with their clerks. The CSEL had agreed to look at the communications strategy and the Chair agreed it would be good to establish systems to support co-ordinated working.

A Director highlighted the new scheme of delegation would be interesting in particular how local governance is referenced with some being called local governing boards and others local advisory boards. The Chair highlighted the importance of delivering on any commitments made: specifically ensuring a communications strategy was in place that included the head teachers, the local governing boards, and the clerks.

There was a discussion regarding the use of the calendar in Governor Hub and populating events in there.

The Chair referred to the board evaluation and the Chair would contact the diocese regarding this and potential providers for this. The Chair highlighted the Board had previously completed the CST evaluation.

STM030/071223 Meeting digital and technology standards – Filtering & Monitoring –
Verbal Update

The CSEL reported this was part of KCSIE 2023 and the MAC was centralising this. The MAC had centralised four of the six schools with the Rosary and St Joseph's not on board yet. Each school had a member of staff responsible for this and a link governor on the local governing boards. The MAC had two link Directors.

STM031/071223 Review Policies - Papers circulated prior to the meeting

Data Protection Policy - The policy was presented, and no questions were raised. It was

Resolved: *the Data Protection Policy was approved.*

Complaints Policy - The Chair raised the issue of Stage 2 and the escalation process highlighting this should include the governors panel and one other individual appointed by the MAC. The CSEL agreed to establish what other MACs were doing and how each panel should be convened. It was also suggested that clarification on collaboration needed to be clear, so the head teachers were aware what was required. The policy was not approved and would be tabled at the next Board meeting. **ACTION: CSEL**

Pay Policy 2023 - The policy was presented, and no questions were raised. It was

Resolved: *the Pay Policy was approved*

The GP confirmed that the policies due for review at the next meeting would be the Business Continuity Plan, Probation Policy, and the Safer Recruitment Policy. The Chair suggested that Directors should review these in preparation, and it was agreed MH would review the Safer Recruitment Policy and the Probation policy and CP would review the Business Continuity Plan. The CSEL should email the policies and any changes to the relevant Directors for review prior to the next meeting. **ACTION: CSEL**

STM032/071223 Directors Training and Visits – Verbal Update

It was suggested that school calendars should be included on Governor Hub to facilitate Director visits to special Masses/ events. It was also suggested Directors should be made aware of any services the MAC had purchased that could be useful for Directors to use. **ACTION: CSEL**

KCSIE 2023 – The GP agreed to remind those members who had not yet completed declarations. **ACTION: GP**

STM033/071223 Any Other Business

Archbishop Ilsley Fire Alarm – The CFO reported the proposal for the fire alarm had been tabled at the Resources Committee meeting on 23.11.23 and the Board had requested further information. The concerns raised were in relation to the effectiveness of a wireless system and what would happen if the system ‘went down’. The CFO confirmed the system was not reliant on wi-fi. The quotes had stated a radio survey was needed and this had been completed on 1.12.23 and was included in the quote. There were 31 transponders and no further costs.

In terms of the maintenance of the system there was a maintenance agreement at a cost of £3400 per annum including two services and faults but there would be call out charges. The CFO had checked solvency and looked at Companies House where there were no issues and assets were £1.5m. The business manager had received two testimonials including one from a local school and Bear Grylls Adventure. The payment terms were 50% of the cost at the start of the work and the remaining 50% on completion. The CFO had also sent emails to the fire officer as requested at the last meeting, but no response had been received.

The CFO clarified the school had received three quotes and the successful bidder was the only fire security provider the other quotes had been from builders.

A Director enquired why ADT had not been approached as they currently provided services to the school. In response the CFO confirmed ADT were primarily burglar alarm providers, but they could be requested to provide a quote, however the CFO highlighted the work needed to be completed as soon as possible.

The Chair requested two Directors be nominated to collaborate with the CFO and agree which company to use. It was agreed that MM and CP would lead on this. The outcome should be reported back to the Board. The Chair thanked the CFO and the Directors, and the Chair wanted to ensure this matter was dealt with appropriate and resolved with a decision being reached between board meetings to prevent any delay. **ACTION: MM/CP/CFO**

Governance documentation – The GP agreed to review the status of outstanding governance documentation and report progress at the next board meeting. **ACTION: GP**

STM034/0712223 Date and Time of next meeting

The next Board meeting would be held on Thursday 1st February 2024 at 1.00pm.

There being no further business for discussion the meeting closed at 15.30.

Closing Prayer

Chairs Signature: **Date:**

BOARD ACTIONS LOG 2023-2024

Minute	Detail	Item	Progress	Lead	Status
STM132/200423	Equality Statement	The CSEL referred to the gender pay gaps and agreed this would be tabled at the next Board meeting. The CSEL confirmed this would not be possible. The CFO reported the MAC was looking for a new HR service provider and one of the providers did have the software to provide this information. The Chair requested the Board be kept apprised of developments. MH and CP requested to be involved in any presentations being made by potential new HR service providers.	This was discussed on 12.10.2023 and actions agreed for the CSEL to pursue.	CSEL	Carry Forward
STM006/121023	Review	Pay data – Provision of data.	Discussed 7.12.2023 matter to be pursued	CSEL	Carry Forward
STM024/071223	CSEL Report	Strategic Plan addressing pupil place planning taking account of falling rolls and expected demographic change. Attendance Action Plan Strategic Action Plan Tracker Update on impact of Maths Hub support at ABI		CSEL CSEL CSEL CSEL	NEW NEW NEW NEW
STM027/071223	The Rosary Safeguarding Report	A Director highlighted that it had been raised that someone was available at weekends and school holidays to deal with safeguarding, how can parents access this support? The CSEL agreed to clarify what the process was.		CSEL	NEW
STM031/071223	Policies	Complaints Policy - The CSEL agreed to establish what other MACs were doing and how each panel should be convened. It was also suggested that clarification on collaboration needed to be clear, so the head teachers were aware what was required. The policy was not approved and would be tabled at the next Board meeting. Business Continuity Plan, Probation Policy, and the Safer Recruitment Policy to be tabled at the next meeting and CSEL to send these MH and CP for review.		CSEL CSEL	NEW NEW
STM032/071223		Directors Training and Visits – Directors should be made aware of any services the MAC had purchased that could be useful for Directors to use. KCSIE 2023 GP agreed to remind those members who had not yet completed declarations.		CSEL GP	NEW NEW

