

**Minutes of the St Teresa of Calcutta MAC Board Meeting held on
Thursday 18th April 2024 at 1.00pm at Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School**

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

Apologies: Susan Hughes, Co-Opted Director (SH)

In Attendance: Professor Paul Ryan, CSEL
 Collette Burge, CFO
 Gerardine Lawson-Lotarew, Assist Governance Manager (GP)
 Victoria Quinn, Governance Professional, The Rosary (VQ)
 Liz Walker, PA to the CSEL (LW)
 Janet Tibbits, Observer (JT)

Opening Prayer

STM051/180424 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies had been received from SH and these were accepted.

The Chair introduced Janet Tibbits who had expressed an interest in joining the Board and Janet would be attending this meeting as an observer.

STM052/180424 Declarations of Interest

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

STM053/180424 Urgent Additional Items

The Chair reported one item in relation to health and safety which would be covered under any other business.

STM054/180424 Membership

The Chair confirmed that AK's term of office was due to expire on 3rd May 2024. AK acknowledged the paperwork for the renewal of the term of office had been completed.

The Chair reported the term of office for DW was due to expire on 6th July 2024. The Chair sought agreement from DW to continue in the role as a co-opted Director and DW agreed to renew the term of office for a further year until 6th July 2025. There being no questions it was

Resolved: *the Board approved the renewal of the term of office for DW until 6th July 2025.*

Succession Planning – The Chair suggested the Board consider succession planning. It was good to have new individuals joining the Board, but it would be appropriate for Directors to consider future chairmanship. SD as the Vice Chair was an enormous support. The Chair acknowledged there had never been any issues with contacting Directors on matters of Board business and the Chair would be

happy for other Director/s to consider chairing. The Chair would be receptive to anyone shadowing the role and any such process would not detract from the normal nomination process in the autumn term.

The Chair reported MH had taken on the chairmanship of the resources committee and the remuneration committee which was a conflict and was not permitted under the Academies Trust Handbook. As yet no volunteers had come forward to take on the chairmanship of the resources committee so it would be appropriate for the Board nominate another Director to chair the resources committee, and ideally this should be completed before the next resources committee meeting in June.

The Chair acknowledged the previous Chair of the resources committee had done an excellent job in presenting the accounts. DW as the finance lead does review these. The CSEL reported that one of the ESFA recommendations was to improve the process. The Chair acknowledged the Board's oversight required assurance of operational efficiency and that this was extended throughout the organisation with the practice being embedded in the MAC schools. The Board needed to be able to talk in confidence that everything was as it should be. DW agreed to look at the accounts each month.

STM055/180424 Minutes of the previous Trust Board meeting held on 1st February 2024 – Circulated prior to the meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on 1st February 2024 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:

STM132/200423 Equality Statement - The CSEL reported HR had provided what they could. BCC had now been advised they would no longer be providing HR services to the MAC, so it would be appropriate to remove this item and the new provider made aware of the requirement for this information to be provided. CLOSED

STM006/121023 Pay Data – This was covered under minute STM132/200423. CLOSED

STM027/071223 The Rosary Safeguarding Report – The CSEL reported that Father Hudson charged £9k per annum, this service covered two schools The Rosary and St Joseph's and was available during the holidays. **A Director enquired if the service was available to all schools.** In response the CFO confirmed some schools employed a Family Support Worker. **A Director sought clarification if the Family Support Worker was term time only.** The CFO confirmed at St Joseph's they were all year round and Holy Souls was term time only. A Director acknowledged all head teachers had some challenge so if it was appropriate the service should be available to all schools to ensure consistency. The Chair requested that further exploration work should be undertaken to explore what a MAC deal would look like but taking into consideration that some schools employ family support workers. A Director suggested that all schools should be advised, and they would have the option to decide whether they wanted to opt into this service. **ACTION: CSEL/CFO**

STM027/071223 The Rosary Safeguarding Report Training – It was agreed the link for the National College training would be sent to Directors. **ACTION: LW**

STM041/010224 CSEL Report – Item included on the agenda 18.4.24. CLOSED

STM042/010224 Strategic Plan – CARRY FORWARD

STM046/010224 Pay Policy - CLOSED

STM048/010224 Directors Visits – Included on the agenda. CLOSED

STM056/180424 Chairs Urgent Actions

None reported.

STM057/180424 Receive Committee Minutes

It was confirmed the minutes were still in draft and would be presented to the Board at the next meeting once approved.

STM057/180424 CSEL Report – Papers circulated prior to the meeting

The CSEL was invited to present the report and highlighted the following:

- The CSEL reported the post title of CSEL would change from the next Board meeting to CEO.

- The CSEL reported NAHT would not be taking any industrial action this year. The NASUWT's Manifesto for Teachers was an ambitious programme for the next government to commit to a New Deal for Teachers, an agenda essential to securing a world-class education system that allowed children and young people to flourish and succeed. The CSEL reported the CST had highlighted the implications if a labour government was elected and this may have implications for funding in schools. The CFO confirmed the MAC had forecast a 3% rise for teachers and 2% for the support staff. The Chair acknowledged the MAC was planning prudently for potential pay rises. Further information was available in the CSEL report on page 2.
- OFSTED Ratings – The CSEL referred Directors to page 2 and the current OFSTED gradings for the MAC schools.
- Safeguarding – The CSEL referred Directors to page 3 of the report and the MAC safeguarding trend for Autumn 2023 v Spring 2024. The CSEL confirmed the MAC was looking at safeguarding issues related to online incidents.
- Pupil Attendance – The CSEL referred Directors to page 3 and highlighted attendance was better than the national average. **A Director noted absence at Holy Souls was high.** It was confirmed this was related to absence involving the same families. **The Chair suggested it would be beneficial to have a dashboard and whether there were any good practices that could be adopted by other schools.** The CSEL confirmed a member of staff at Holy Trinity had attendance as an area of expertise and they had visited Archbishop Ilsey. The CSEL was waiting for the report clarifying the areas adopted. The Chair suggested it would be good to know how best practice was shared from the networks. Some schools had good levels of attendance in areas of high deprivation. **A Director enquired about the trends.** The Chair suggested from previous experience it was variable and could fluctuate, and improvement did not appear to be sustained. The CSEL suggested this was not a post pandemic issue in Archbishop Ilsey or Holy Souls as it had been the same prior to the pandemic. JT highlighted the DfE had a lot of strategies, and the key message was that attendance had to be the responsibility of every member of staff. **A Director sought clarification on who issued fines to parents for absence.** This was confirmed as Birmingham City Council.
- Staff Survey – The CSEL reported some lessons had been learnt from the survey and evaluation was required. 82% of staff were proud to work for the MAC but there were still workload issues. The CSEL had committed to work with middle leaders on workloads. The last performance reviews with head teachers had noted an improvement in workload and demands on their time. The MAC was going to undertake a parent/pupil survey over the academic year. **A Director noted the low response rate 21% and was concerned with some of the responses which needed to be investigated further. A Director also noted it appeared that it was one school and the level of engagement and effectiveness of SLT. The MAC must be seen to follow up on this by conversation or a further survey that digs deeper to identify the issues.** The Chair suggested the aim should be to achieve a bigger response and address some of the key issues. **A Director suggested the low feedback could be related to two things whereby the staff believe there was no point in completing the survey which should be acknowledged as a potential ‘cry for help’. Therefore, focus on whatever trend was coming through so that staff could see something was being done so next time the survey was done the staff see some recognition of the concerns.** Directors agreed it was important for the staff to see something was being done, however it should also be noted that some of the schools’ responses had been positive. The CSEL reported the trade unions were pleased with the survey and staff voice so it would need following up. The CSEL had met with the head teachers and the staff survey was on the agenda. The head teachers would be talking these through with their respective SLT’s and formulating a plan.
- The Chair highlighted the ESFA report had highlighted Holy Souls and Archbishop Ilsey being low on capitation but high on staffing costs. It was raised in the survey about how the MAC money was spent. We do have deprivation funding but there were basic things required for the education of children and they did not cost a significant amount as opposed to funding training, so what would it cost to fund resources for a primary.
- Directors discussed the availability of items and staff being able to identify what was required. Discussion centred around the level of stationery and costs. The CFO confirmed it was not necessarily matching schools like for like with resources. The Chair suggested the consistent use of ledger codes was useful but there was a concern about teachers not having the materials

in the classroom. Deprivation funding was available and restricted the disadvantaged pupils if they did not have the basics.

- 6th Form – The CSEL reported the secondary head teachers share an aspiration to strengthen sixth form provision across the MAC. Archbishop Ilsley wanted to increase student numbers in Year 12 and improve retention/success rates in Year 13. For Holy Trinity it was the determination to provide pupils with a KS5 pathway/transition that enabled them to continue to flourish within the ethos of our faith environments and wider academy. The head teachers had met frequently to discuss potential models going forward and had spoken about this with the leadership teams particularly those with curriculum responsibility. These discussions would run alongside other priorities and pressures the schools were facing. The Ofsted visits in schools during September had meant a pause in the momentum in the first half-term of this academic year. Discussions and work had subsequently been restored and remain as an ongoing priority. **The Chair sought clarification that if there was no joint offer would there be pupils from Holy Trinity at Archbishop Ilsley from September 2024.** The CSEL confirmed there would be close to 200 pupils in the 6th form from September. **The Chair suggested it would be good to acknowledge what the MAC did success in as well as what they did not. The Board needed to see the detailed strategy curriculum development, subject areas, a survey of the uptake, destinations, what were students doing and where were they were going. So, the strategy needed to be the steps along the way and if there was no brochure available by Christmas there would not be anything in September 2025. It would not be appropriate to say this was going to happen if it was not.** Directors discussed the issue and agreed that a project plan was required to identify how the MAC would achieve the joint offer and what resources would be required. The Chair agreed and identified the CSEL's previous experience of projects would be invaluable in planning this. This should be given priority, but the Board needed to know now if this could not be achieved. Therefore, the brochure, costings everything associated with the joint provision was required.
- Bromcom – The CSEL reported the MAC was now using Bromcom for attendance and pupil data. The MAC needed to develop Bromcom further for all schools to record behaviour and pupil assessments. Work had commenced with the primary schools on assessment recording but there needed to be further discussion with the head teachers. The Rosary needed to migrate onto Bromcom, this would commence in May.
- Strategic Planning Day 2024-2025 – The CSEL thanked CP for the support with this and reported on 8th April the CEO Group welcomed Chris Price to observe the Strategic Operation planning day. It was decided to move forward with a new model for objective planning, improving our current approach. The new model would be based on a new "School Profiling" model. The document would be ready for presentation at the June board meeting, detailing a clear timeline for implementation.
- Payroll & HR Provider – The CFO reported two providers had been taken through to final stage, based on references and matrix scores.
- Finance – The CSEL/CFO reported the February management accounts had been uploaded onto GovernorHub. Directors were referred to the reserve's summary on page 5 of the report.
- Appointment of External Auditors – The CSEL reported the Academy Trust Handbook required a review of the external audit process following the acceptance and approval of the annual accounts and audit report. The Academies Trust Handbook required academy trusts to re-tender their audit contract at least every five years. For the MAC this would be for financial year 2024/25. The resources committee agreed to engage UHY Hacker Young as the external auditor for the financial year 2023/24.
- Strategic Plan – The CSEL referred Directors to page 8 of the report. All challenges had been identified in the staff survey in addition to attendance, challenging behaviours, and attainment. **The Chair acknowledged there had been three very detailed reports from external services and some good practice was found and some historical issues identified. There was a lot of work to be done to embed self-improving teams at every level.** In response the CSEL suggested this could be a cultural issue and had been ongoing unchecked for some time. There were several interventions in place. At Archbishop Ilsley attendance and punctuality was being reviewed. The CSEL referred Directors to the strategic IT lead summary and confirmed a central MAC helpdesk had been established for the primaries. The next school for website development was Holy Trinity, The Rosary. There being no further questions it was

Resolved: the CSEL Report was received and accepted.

STM058/180424 **Priorities for the Summer Term** – Verbal update/some papers circulated prior to the meeting

It was reported the MAC would need to have a clear project for delivery in 2025 with costings and recruitment of students to be ready by December 2024 if this was to happen in 2025. A survey of destinations and visits to successful providers when the MAC had the partnership and embedding in the curriculum planning.

St Josephs had a CSI visit and the report had been very positive. Thanks were extended to Rachel Girling, Head Teacher at Holy Souls for the support. The SSIL was working with St Josephs and was confident they would do well. **SD requested the Standards Committee was updated at the next meeting in June. ACTION: SSIL/GP**

Pupil Student Destinations – The Chair highlighted the MAC needed to know where secondary children were from and where they would be going when leaving secondary. There needed to be continuity from year 6 to year 7 with the only bulk transfer being from Holy Souls to Archbishop Ilsey.

The data for years 11, 12 and 13 was shared and the Chair requested the Directors needed the current year 11 and destinations so when the data was available the MAC needed to see where the pupils were going. Had the pupils received the support for transitioning to the sixth form, what was the MAC doing to prepare students and was the curriculum meeting the needs. The data was required separately for years 11, 12 and 13. **The Chair sought clarification if the MAC had this data.** In response the CSEL confirmed it had. **The Chair acknowledged the more information the board had the better and Holy Trinity data would be equally important.**

The Chair sought clarification from Directors if there were any further priorities not included in the above discussion. A Director suggested SEN. This was moving forward well, and language training was ongoing.

Attendance and inclusion were also raised as priorities and a request that the MAC consider the most able and those high prior attainments.

STM059/180424 **Finance**

This had been included in the CSEL Report.

STM060/180424 **Trust Board Self Evaluation** – Verbal Update

The Chair acknowledged the Board had not yet found anyone for the external review. It had been suggested to use the NGA but the Chair would prefer someone who had carried out a MAC review. Therefore, the Board would continue with self-review and if anyone did become aware of any other MACs who had undergone a review and could provide a good reference that would be helpful.

STM061/180424 **Review Policies** – Circulated prior to the meeting

The Communications Policy was raised and the CSEL confirmed this was with the head teachers at the schools currently prior to presentation to the Board.

Capability Policy – A Director raised a query from page 6 (1.14) regarding the time frame for the retention of documentation. Following discussion, it was agreed to leave this unchanged.

A Director raised a query about the length of time a written warning remains on file for a head teacher as opposed to other staff. This was clarified by the Chair, and it was agreed to leave this item unchanged.

A Director raised a query from item 9 (Companion) and sought clarification whether HR were involved at this stage. Directors discussed the matter, and it was agreed that this should be amended to include that HR should be involved. **ACTION: CSEL**

Disciplinary Policy – A Director sought clarification regarding the appeals and whether the appeal manager could increase the sanction. It was agreed that the appeals manager could not change the sanctions and the policy would remain unchanged. There being no further questions it was

Resolved: the Disciplinary Policy was approved

Grievance Policy – The Chair highlighted that the staff needed to be aware of the policy and training should be provided, this would help encourage pre-grievance discussions. There being no further questions it was

Resolved: the Grievance Policy was approved

Managing Organisation Change Policy – No questions were raised and it was

Resolved: the Managing Organisation Change Policy was approved

The Board had agreed to adopt the BCC policies but requested that when the new HR provider was appointed, they should review the policies.

RSE Policy – The Board agreed further detail was needed and SLT's and RE leaders to work on the policy and this should then be presented back to the Board. **ACTION: CSEL**

The Chair confirmed there were four policies for approval at the next Board meeting and Directors were requested to review the current policies prior to tabling these at the Board meeting. Following discussion, it was agreed the policies would be reviewed as follows:

- Charging & Remissions Policy - AC
- Communications Policy - Chair
- Business Continuity Plan - CP

STM062/180424 BDES Monitoring Visit – Verbal Update

The CSEL reported Archbishop Ilesley received a visit on 22.3.24. Two weeks' notice was received. The MAC had until the end of April to respond.

The Directors engaged in a discussion about the recruitment of foundation governors in schools.

The CSEL reported that in terms of project growth, because of the challenges the MAC had been asked to wait before taking the six schools. However, the DfE had contacted the MAC and requested the MAC to get the six schools to join. The BDES had advised the MAC to wait until the new flourishing schools in flourishing MACs was published. The Chair reported there had been a meeting with the BDES and the MAC needed to know about moving forward but nothing had been received from the BDES although the MAC knew the DfE wanted to go ahead. The CSEL believed that following the presentation by the BDES the trustees would be voting on the issue, so the MAC was advised to wait until Steve Bell was back. The CFO had received an email requesting an update on due diligence and the process for the six schools joining the MAC. A response had been sent but the MAC had not heard anything.

The Chair acknowledged the MAC could not commence due diligence until the MAC had drawn down the conversion grants and no work should be undertaken. Directors discussed the growth and felt that there were mixed messages being received about the schools joining the MAC. The CSEL highlighted the aim was to get ten schools. The Chair agreed to speak to the Diocese to establish what was happening. The CSEL reported there was a conference on 17.5.24 at which Steve Bell would be presenting on this issue. **ACTION: CHAIR**

STM063/180424 Directors Training and Visits – Verbal Update

The Chair thanked the SSIL for the excellent safer recruitment training.

The Chair requested details of the National College training. **ACTION: LW**

STM064/180424 Any Other Business

The CSEL reported the HSE had identified some breaches at Archbishop Illsley with the gym roof. It was tested for asbestos, but it did not contain any. All compliance reporting goes annually to Toni Guest at the Diocese. The MAC was looking at introducing a monitoring tool for this and an audit of schools, so this had been commissioned.

The Chair reported the items highlighted were generalist and how could this happen. There may be a gap in relation to the responsibility for the management of the site. The site manager was now managed by the business manager, so the business plan needed to be updated to confirm action had been taken and the action plan presented at the next resources committee meeting.

In terms of the risk register this was on GovernorHub, and the Board had a duty of oversight so health and safety should be identified as an amber risk and highlight the serious consequences of the things that could go wrong. Had there been an accident the consequences could have been catastrophic. So, the risk register should be revisited looking at all schools monitoring processes and management needs to be in place and not picked up by someone else.

The CFO confirmed the HSE was inspecting all schools in the country with the main area of concern being asbestos. The Chair acknowledged relief that nothing had happened, and the MAC had been given the opportunity to improve aspects of health and safety.

STM065/180424 Date and Time of next meeting

Directors discussed the remaining meetings for the current academic year, and it was agreed to change the meetings as follows:

- Resources Committee meeting would now be held on Thursday 27th June 2024 at 10.00am.
- Standards Committee meeting would now be held on Thursday 27th June 2024 at 12.30pm
- Trust Board meeting would now be held on Thursday 11th July 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
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.	1.2.2024 The Chair requested the CSEL should clarify the arrangements as this was in response to a question raised by a Director at the previous meeting.	CSEL	Carry forward
STM027/071223	The Rosary Safeguarding Report	Training - The CSEL confirmed this was available and the Chair requested the instructions on how to access this information was shared with Directors as well as which areas of training these providers covered. 18.04.2024 CSEL and CFO to explore what a MAC deal would look like for using Father Hudson's across all schools	18.04.24 Link for National College training to be sent to Directors	LW CSEL/CFO	NEW Carry forward
STM042/010224	Strategic Plan	The Chair confirmed that there should be one updated integrated plan that contained all strategies, timelines and expected completion date and this should be tabled at the next Board meeting. A Director suggested that there should be a presentation of the plan with the sub strategies. The CSEL confirmed the updated version of the plan which contained the sub-strategies would be sent to the GP. If there were still any gaps or anything was not clear this could be addressed. The Chair highlighted that the Board had not seen any timelines for impact yet.		CSEL GP CSEL CSEL	Carry forward Carry forward Carry forward
STMO58/180424	CSEL Report	The SSIL was working with St Josephs and was confident they would do well. SD requested that the Standards Committee was updated at the next meeting in June.		SSIL/GP	New
STMO61/180424	Policies	A Director raised a query from item 9 (Companion) and sought clarification whether HR were involved at this stage. Directors discussed the matter, and it was agreed that this should be amended to include that HR should be involved.		CSEL	New
STMO61/180424	Policies	RSE Policy – The Board agreed that further detail was needed and SLT's and RE leaders to work on the policy and this should then be presented back to the Board.		CSEL	New
STMO62/180424	BDES Monitoring	The CSEL highlighted the aim was to get 10 schools. The Chair agreed to speak to the Diocese to establish what was happening.		Chair	New