

**Minutes of the St Teresa of Calcutta MAC Board Meeting held on
Thursday 13th March 2025 at 1.00pm**

- Present:** Frances McGarry, Foundation Director, Chair
Sean Devlin, Foundation Director (SD) Vice Chair
Mary Higgins, Foundation Director (MH)
Andrew Kennedy, Foundation Director (AK)
Andrew Cullinane, Foundation Director (AC)
Christopher Price, Foundation Director (CP)
Mary A Mills, Foundation Director (MM)
- Apologies:** David Whale, Co-Opted Director, (DW)
Janet Tibbits, Foundation Director (JT)
- In Attendance:** Professor Paul Ryan, CEO
Gerardine Lawson-Lotarew, Assist Governance Manager (GP)
Liz Walker, PA to the CEO (LW)
Collette Burge, CFO

Opening Prayer

STM019/130325 Welcome and Apologies

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

STM020/130325 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

STM021/130325 Membership Update

There had been no changes or updates to membership to report.

STM022/130325 Chairs Urgent Actions

None reported.

STM023/130325 Urgent Additional Items

None.

STM024/130325 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 21st November 2024 – *Circulated prior to the meeting*

The minutes from the meeting held on 21st November 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:

STMO61/180424 Capability Policy – **CLOSED**

STMO73/110724 CEO Report – A discussion took place regarding the pupil survey with a request for a standardised survey across the schools. Directors also discussed the staff survey, and the CEO reported this was being discussed in SMT with a view to determining the questions. Following on from this there would then be a parental survey.

The Chair reiterated that the board had requested a parental survey and the head teachers completing an analysis of the returns and what had happened because of the survey in relation to implementation and review. Directors felt it was prudent to repeat the survey.

A Director enquired if the pupil survey had been completed last year and why had it not been repeated. The CEO confirmed that schools had completed their own survey through pupil voice. The Chair highlighted it was good practice if the school was doing a curriculum review to do the pupil voice. However, this would be different MAC wide, and this was something agreed by the Board and if it were not done it should not come off the list of actions. The Chair confirmed that MM had previously suggested the survey be completed in the autumn term and there was a difference between reviewing this and abandoning. Strategy, planning and communications matter so what would happen.

The CEO confirmed there would be a review of the questions and the pupil survey would be completed before Easter.

The Chair enquired when the staff survey would be completed. In response the CEO confirmed this would be in the summer term.

A Director requested that feedback about transitional students from parents was important during October – November. – CARRIED FORWARD

STMO73/110724 Finance – It was reported the CFO had completed the breakdown. ***The Chair reiterated the Board had a responsibility for oversight of finance and questioning trends to establish how information was recorded and any variance particularly with the expansion of the MAC. CARRIED FORWARD***

STMO76/110724 Risk Assessment. **CLOSED**

STMO79/180424 Directors Training and Visits. **CLOSED**

STM002/211124 Governance Professional. No further progress at this stage. **CARRIED FORWARD**

STM007/211124 Code of Conduct for Directors (CES) – Requires personalisation to the MAC. **CARRIED FORWARD**

STM013/211124 CEO Report – Included on the agenda. **CLOSED**

STM016/211124 Appraisal Policy – Included on the agenda. **CLOSED**

STM025/130325 **Receive Final Approved Committee Minutes** – *Circulated prior to the meeting*

Standards Committee Final Minutes 12th September 2024 – The Minutes were reviewed and there being no questions it was

Resolved: the minutes were approved.

Standards Committee Draft Minutes 20th February 2025 – SD reported from the standards committee meeting highlighting the following:

- presentation given by the Head Teacher at Holy Souls.
- Behaviour, Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion concerns.
- Archbishop Ilsey progress
- Concern about EAL at the Rosary.
- Secondary GCSE outcomes satisfactory but English and maths was a concern.
- Primary outcomes with improvement needed in reading and writing.

The CEO reported the dashboards would be reviewed. The Directors discussed the content and length of the standards committee meeting and whether the committee only require the headlines. The Directors appreciate it was about balance, and it was a good conversation, but the meetings need to be contained to two hours. The Chair of the committee appreciated all the information, and the work put in to achieve this but clarified the presentation did not need to be delivered as a whole and just the important elements should be highlighted. Therefore, a strategic approach was suggested. The Chair also requested the information should be accompanied by an impact statement and what required focus. There being no questions it was

Resolved: the draft Standards Committee Minutes were noted pending final approval by the standards committee and presentation to the Board.

Resources Committee Final Minutes 24th October 2024 – The Minutes were reviewed and there being no questions it was

Resolved: the minutes were approved.

Resources Committee Draft Minutes 20th February 2025 – The Chair reported the meeting had been finance driven and the committee had looked at each school and their finances. Also looked at SEND funding, new schools joining the MAC and due diligence. There was a brief discussion about the contracting of DRB for the due diligence work and it was reported significant due diligence had been undertaken by one of the Directors on the company and they were just awaiting the accounts.

The Chair highlighted that Mark O'Connell from the Diocese had been approached regarding the use of DRB and whether the Diocese recommend them, the Diocese have confirmed they do not. Therefore, this does not absolve the MAC of responsibility for oversight. Had the BDES recommended DRB then that would have been the MAC's assurance.

The CEO reported that estates had also been discussed and IT with the movement to Cloud and the mitigation of risk.

A Director highlighted that forecasting spend was also discussed particularly with the expansion of the MAC. The CEO confirmed the new schools have had condition reports. There being no further questions it was

Resolved: the draft Resources Committee Minutes were noted pending final approval by the committee and presentation to the Board.

STM026/130325 CEO Report – *Circulated prior to the meeting*

The CEO referred to the report and highlighted the following with further information being available in the report:

- Schools Bill
- Changes to OFSTED Framework
- Mandatory Reporting
- Pupil Survey – This matter had already been discussed previously in the meeting.
- MAC Formation Day – This was the third annual MAC Formation Day held on February 14th.
- Meet the Team' session update - Meet the Team had taken place on 6th February 2025. This was attended by new Headteachers, some accompanied by their Deputy Heads and Chairs of Governors. Presentations from the Central team, covering key areas such as Finance, IT, Governance, and School Improvement, were well-received. The presentations aimed to provide a clear understanding of the support available and the operational frameworks in place.
- STOC MAC Sports Day - The inaugural MAC Sports Day was scheduled to take place on 13th June 2025, at Alexander Stadium. This was raised as part of pupil voice feedback where pupils wanted a competitive event between schools. **A Director enquired if this included the new schools joining the MAC.** The CEO confirmed it did not as these schools were not joining the MAC until September 2025.
- Catholic Life – Rachel Girling was co-ordinating this for the MAC.
- Year of Jubilee – This was launched in January.
- Marketing – Continuing work with the University of Derby as part of the marketing strategy. MAC currently has two interns for ten weeks. Directors acknowledged it was good to use the resource to do some of the work. One of the interns could be available to do some of the things the staff or head teachers could not do.

The Chair noted the content of the report and at this stage invited questions from the Directors.

The Chair enquired how the admissions was progressing. The CFO responded there were ten extra pupils at Archbishop IIsley. The CEO confirmed that in terms of class size the school agreed with this. The Board discussed the issue of admissions and the impact of ongoing demographic change, over the three-year period.

The Chair referred to marketing and requested the CEO report back at the next meeting on impact. ACTION: CEO

The Chair raised an issue about catholic social teaching and the planned secondment, presented in partnership with a Catholic University. The CEO confirmed this was on the MAC website in the form of a podcast.

- School Improvement – Referring to SEN a Director reported that Birmingham LEA had a new directorate so they were having to start again with SEN strategy, and it would be some time perhaps two years before SEN gets to where it should be. In terms of the MAC strategic plan this should be borne in mind. The MAC was trying to establish dialogue between SENCOS and external agencies. It would be difficult to manage with releasing staff from the classroom. The CFO clarified that not all staff were fulltime. The Chair suggested this would be CPD so it would be good to build in time for cover. The CFO highlighted that in terms of the budget the MAC needed to be mindful that this would be tight next year and none of the SENCOS were fully classroom based. The CEO suggested attending the next network meeting and see what support was required. **ACTION: CEO TO SPEAK TO EH**

- ICT – The CEO confirmed the MAC had commissioned two AI platforms to support pupils in the classroom including the use of ‘co-pilot’. Trials were taking place, and the CEO would report back to the Board. **ACTION: CEO.** The CEO also reported all schools were live on the new website except St Chads and preparing for windows.
- Finance – **A Director raised concern about the forecast for each school for year end.** The CFO clarified the deficit was due to investment in capital projects with some funded out of reserves. **The Director raised a question about St Joseph’s.** The CFO confirmed the school would be left with £157k. The CFO reported the new budget would be ready in June when all the forecasts would be available. **A Director queried the MAC deficit.** In response the CFO confirmed this was for all schools but there was an £18k in year deficit but reserves were £1.8m. It was confirmed the finances had been scrutinised at the resources committee and it was accepted there would be some things that could not be done. There being no further questions it was

Resolved: the CEO’s Report was presented and accepted by the Board.

STM027/130325 MAC Growth Update – Verbal Update

The CEO reported six schools would be joining the MAC in September 2025. Directors engaged in a discussion around the CMAT and changes to the structure of the CMAT.

Academy Conversion Timeline – The Chair gave an overview of the previous conversion and finances. The Chair referred to the letter that had been sent welcoming the schools and noted the MAC had seen significant due diligence reports on the previous schools. The Chair appreciated the amount of work that had been completed at the time, but the Chair wanted to emphasise that the MAC was welcoming the schools. However, the concern was the liabilities the Board may inherit so the Board would require an advanced plan. There was concern about the timeline and Board oversight. The Chair would like to see more information than what had already been provided.

A Director felt there should be a strategic plan, due diligence and accounts so the Board needed something. In response the CFO clarified the difference with the previous conversions was the academy order, and the MAC had not yet had these so the MAC could not start the due diligence process. The CFO confirmed the MAC did have the 2022 accounts and there were some updated figures. The CFO was going to meet the finance staff in the schools. All estates, finance and staffing would be covered in the due diligence which would be available by the end of May.

A Director sought clarification if the MAC had to wait for the academy order. The CFO clarified that if the regions group said no then a lot of work would have been completed on something that may not happen. However, the MAC was doing some work.

A Director enquired why the MAC had not received the academy order yet. The CFO confirmed it would follow on from the meetings.

The Chair suggested that some knowledge of the head teachers concerns at the new schools over the next few years would be welcome. This could include matters such as falling rolls. The Chair suggested that an extraordinary meeting was required to look at the due diligence reports. Directors agreed the due diligence had to be done robustly and review timelines for the conversion in relation to staffing, finance etc. The CFO confirmed this was being led by the legal team who would conclude the review of title documents and then start the discussions with the LEA on the transfer.

The Directors discussed the structure of the MAC and what would be required in relation to estates which would be the initial focus. The Chair was keen to have a plan and the EO meeting with the relevant papers beforehand would be advisable. It was proposed the meeting should be held in June. **ACTION: CFO**

The Directors had a further discussion around schools and the top slice and GAG funding, and Directors requested to see the pupil numbers and depth of change, also what is the SEND requirement.

STM028/130325 School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool – *Circulated prior to the meeting*

The SRMSA had been presented to the resources committee for review, and this was now presented to the Board for approval. There being no questions it was

Resolved: *the School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool was approved.*

STM029/130325 Risk Register – *Available on GovernorHub*

The risk register was available for all Directors to view on GovernorHub, and this was also discussed and reviewed in the committee meetings.

STM030/130325 Surveys

Already discussed earlier in the meeting.

STM031/130325 Environmental Strategy – *Paper circulated prior to the meeting*

The Overview of Sustainability in Our Schools: Current Status and Strategic Directions for Future Improvement paper was reviewed and there being no questions it was

Resolved: *the paper was accepted.*

STM032/130325 Safeguarding Report – *Paper circulated prior to the meeting*

The CEO presented the report and highlighted The Rosary. There being no questions it was

Resolved: *the safeguarding report was presented and accepted by the Board.*

STM033/130325 Directors Training & Visits – *Verbal Update*

Nothing was reported.

STM034/130325 Review Policies – *Policies circulated prior to the meeting*

- **Safer Recruitment Policy** – The policy would be reviewed by MH prior to approval.

- **Capability Policy** – The policy was presented and there being no questions it was

Resolved: *the Capability Policy was approved pending agreement from the Diocese.*

- **Disciplinary Policy** - The policy was presented and there being no questions it was

Resolved: *the Disciplinary Policy was approved pending agreement from the Diocese.*

- **Grievance Policy** - The policy was presented and there being no questions it was

Resolved: *the Grievance Policy was approved pending agreement from the Diocese.*

The foregoing CES policies have subsequently been approved post meeting by the BDES via LW on 19.3.25.

- **AI Policy** - The policy was presented, and it was confirmed CP had reviewed the policy. There being no questions it was

Resolved: *the AI Policy was approved.*

The Board requested all MAC policies should have the front cover containing the information on who reviewed the policy, the origins of the policy, any changes since the previous policy was agreed and any adaptations made for the MAC. The date should also be indicated on the front cover and the date of review.

The Board also questioned whether the HR providers to the MAC should look at the policies and provide guidance. It would also be helpful to have an overview of the context of what had been changed.

STM035/130325 Any Other Business

The CEO reported on a year 12 student trip to India through Challenges Abroad, an initiative introduced by the Head of Archbishop Ilsey School.

Confidential Item not for publication – At this point in the meeting the staff in attendance were requested to leave the meeting. The CEO, CFO and LW left the meeting at 15.15.

Confidential Minutes of STOMAC Board Meeting 30th January 2025 – *Circulated at the Meeting*
The minutes from the meeting held on 30th January 2025 were reviewed and no amendments were made. It was:

Resolved: *the minutes were approved to be signed by the Chair and retained under confidential cover.*

STM036/130325 Date and Time of Next Meetings

- Thursday 3rd July 2025 at 1.00pm

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

Chairs Signature:..... Date:

BOARD ACTIONS LOG 2024-2025

STM073/110724	CEO Report	Parent Survey - A Director noted the pupil survey would be in the autumn so the staff survey would be in the spring and the parents in the summer. A Director sought clarity whether this was the correct order in surveying year 7 just as they had come into the schools. A discussion followed and the CEO was tasked to look at the schedule.	See minutes under actions STM024/130325	CEO	Carried Forward
STM073/110724	Finance	CPD spending; variance in allocating costings made Board strategic oversight difficult. Need to consider a MAC wide approach. A Director sought clarification when the marketing strategy would be presented to the board? LW confirmed this was already under discussion. The Chair enquired if the strategies were known and could the board have this strategy on the agenda for the next meeting with a report in advance to the board. Marketing strategy was presented. Budget in hand	22.11.24 The CEO was requested to consider how each school assigns costings to budget headings and to see if this could be better harmonised to ease benchmarking by the central team and oversight by the board.	CEO CEO	Carried forward
STM002/211124	Confirmation of Governance Professional	It was noted with the developing changes of the MAC it would be necessary for governance to be considered, and reference would be bought back to the board. Governance was on the agenda for the CEP meeting on 29 th November 2024 and it was agreed that legal advice would need to be sought.	See minutes under actions STM024/130325	CEO	Carried forward
STM007/211124	Review	Code of Conduct for Directors (CES) – The code of conduct had been circulated prior to the meeting and Directors were requested to complete this and return them to the GP.	See minutes under actions STM024/130325	ALL	Carried Forward
STM026/130325	CEO Report	Marketing - The Chair referred to marketing and requested the CEO report back at the next meeting on impact. The Chair raised an issue about catholic social teaching. The CEO confirmed this was on the MAC website in the form of a podcast. School Improvement – SENCOS. The Chair suggested this would be CPD so it would be good to build in time for cover. The CFO highlighted that in terms of the budget the MAC needed to be mindful that this would be tight next year and none of the SENCOS were fully classroom based. The CEO suggested attending the next network meeting and see what support was required.		CEO CEO	NEW NEW

		ICT – The CEO confirmed the MAC had commissioned two AI platforms to support pupils in the classroom including the use of 'co-pilot'. Trials were taking place, and the CEO would report back to the Board.		CEO	NEW
STM027/130325	MAC Growth	The Chair was keen to have a plan and the EO meeting with the relevant papers beforehand would be advisable. It was proposed the meeting should be held in June.		CFO	NEW