

THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST
COMPANY NUMBER: 7359755

Subject	Meeting of the Board of Directors	Date	20 th October 2021
Room	Via Teams Call	Time	5.00pm
Present	Stuart Gardner (SG), David Lycett (DL), Derek Morrison (DM), Gerard Newman (GN), Michael Bailey (MB), Ian Mason (IM) Julie Spurgeon (JS) Linda Randall (LR)	Clerk	June Leigh
Apologies accepted	Vickey Ferguson (VF), Peter Martin (PM), Gary Chapman (GC)	In attendance	Kelly Denton (KD), Lee Miller (LM), Kaye Bettey (KB), Matthew Fleet (MF),
Non-attendees			

Key Points Discussed and Action Items				
No.	Agenda Item	Action/Discussion	By whom	When
1.	Declaration of business interests	There were no declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda		
2.	Welcome and apologies for absence	GN welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Peter Martin, Vickey Ferguson, Gary Chapman		
3.	Minutes and matters arising	GN advised the Board that the process for proposing and seconding resolutions will be changing going forward, for general resolutions the proposer will be the Chief Executive and seconded by the Chair this will be for all general Trust items. The committee chairs will be the proposer for the items that are relevant to which they are the Chair, in approving resolutions will be a show of hands, to ensure that we have an affirmative approval. Matters arising: 26th August 2021 Q: GN: MAT Inspections, invitation to John Cavell to hold a session with the Board, where		

		The Board unanimously agreed to appointment		
5.	CEO Update	<p>SG advised that a full board report will be available for the December meeting.</p> <p>SG discussed with the Board the Ofsted reports, advising that MJS and MWI inspections had successful outcomes, outcomes are currently embargoed.</p> <p>Q: Are Goodwin ready for an inspection? A: SG: Advised that Goodwin are ready.</p> <p>Strategic Goals SG discussed and gave an update to the Board around the Strategic Goals 2021/2022, Evolution of Self of Professional Growth. Performance Management and the Professional Growth processes has been slightly extended until the end of November.</p> <p>Trust of Choice SG shared with the Board how Plymouth High have adopted the model and thinking about the School Improvement Plan. Induction went really well, rolled out from 20/21. Changing MAT Monday's approaches, closing schools slightly earlier. Using Teams are working well, reducing workload and sharing resources.</p> <p>Growing Great Leaders SG mentioned that Thinking Horizons have seen an increase in the Primary participation, Early Career framework is in place, supervision and coaching for Headteachers are in place. SG advised the Board that we will not be running Teacher Training due to the super hubs, will engage with the super hubs, still be able to offer trainees, but will not have the control. Will look to possibly re-establish in the future.</p> <p>Growing with Confidence SG advised that GB has successfully re-established the Quality Insurance processes across the Trust.</p> <p>Success Through Learning SG discussed the launch of Little Thinkers project in Portsmouth. SG thanked LM. Visited TPA 1:1 digital project, 80% up-take in first year, but raises a few questions around future roll outs, what that would mean if rolling out to multiple schools in a single year.</p> <p>Q: Due to only 80% take up is this causing difficulties? A: LM: Operational challenges around 20% not taking this up, but this is decreasing. Every child has access to 1:1 device in year 7 at Portsmouth Academy. 20% currently have a swap</p>		

		<p>in, swap out service during and after school.</p> <p>DL advised this has been really positive but issue is that the 20% can't continue learning at home.</p> <p>LM advised that NS has been working to understand the barriers of the 20%, confident in review process we will identify changes to our operating model when we move to the second phase things will look different.</p> <p>Other Yellow Hats</p> <p>SG advised the board that the Rainbow Fish provision at Penhale has launched. Thinking Tuition launching a limited pilot from start of term 3, still able to access catch up funding and the provision through the school. SG advised currently working in Plymouth around [REDACTED] Successful Exec residential and HT conference.</p> <p>Trust conference, GB and volunteers have made a success of the conferences, SG thanked all for the hard work</p> <p>Strategic Developments</p> <p>SG updated the board on the Strategic Developments taking place, briefly mentioned the exploration of how to measure impact of Total Education in terms of ambition.</p> <p>SG mentioned around taking a step back to fully understand the use of Knowledge Banks within the Trust.</p> <p>Continuing to reflect on the 1:1 device rollout across the Trust. The need to develop a central Trust lead for SEND provision to support schools.</p> <p>Trust Growth</p> <p>SG briefly gave the Board an update on Plympton Academy conversion January 2022. [REDACTED] on going discussions and had a visit to Central and Victory. [REDACTED] identified as only MAT to be introduced to the area, meeting in term 2.</p> <p>Board Decisions: Confidential</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>		
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[REDACTED]

SG: Prosper
GN: Secunder
Board approved unanimously

Second decision to be made is around alcohol, we currently allow this with a meal when staying away with work, we need to update the Board with the current wording from the EFSA, *'The trust's funds must not be used to purchase alcohol for consumption'*.

SG requested the board approval to continue with our current policy.

LM advised that this is around £500 for the year, the auditors are becoming stricter around their view on this.

Q: What is the Trust's justification for allowing this?

A: LM explained that occasionally staff stay away from home for an extensive time, felt not unreasonable with an evening meal to have a glass of wine.

Q: What are the ramifications?

A: LM: The ESFA is the regulator, could call into question our use of funds, possibly take action against us.

Q: Is there a cap on the alcohol value of the item?

A: LM: £20 on the value of a meal and drink.

		<p>Q: Is it guidance or a policy? A: LM: It is regulations, a requirement.</p> <p>SG: Proposer GN: Seconder</p> <p>GN asked for a show of hands to continue with the current policy. Board members did not approve the spend on alcohol going forward. GN advised that the policy will need to be changed. LM to action</p> <p>GN thanked SG for his CEO update.</p>	LM	
6.	Plympton Academy update	<p>LM advised that KD has been doing a fantastic job running the project on behalf of the Trust. LM gave a few key updates, currently on track, successfully completed the TUPE process, all went well. No representation against the move, introduced all the measures for Plympton staff to transfer into TSAT staff, no concerns have been made during the consultation process. Land transferring arrangements, on track, land transaction, going from one Academy Trust to another, couple of third-party rights that need to be transferred across, Football Foundation as they have a right to the land, working with solicitors to finalise. Working on transfer on Central staff, currently working with Business Director at Plympton, all on schedule, moral is good within the school.</p> <p>LM advised the Board that as this is an Academy to Academy transfer, there will be an empty company that will be left behind, we will then be responsible for closing that company down. LM informed the Board that he has taken on responsibility to close that down.</p> <p>Q: Do they have any other assets? A: LM: Healthy asset position that we are inheriting. It is an all liability transfer.</p> <p>Q: What is the date they will join? A: LM: 1st January 2022</p>		
7.	Board Development Plan	<p>KD discussed the first objective in the development plan was to establish an avenue for a diverse parent and Pupil Voice to the Board, identified that one of the areas that we dropped on the capacity framework review was working with stake holders. Proposal is to look at different models, with Exec, that would incorporate Pupil Voice into the Board, plan to be in place for September 2022.</p> <p>KD mentioned the Board not getting the right information at the right time on occasions, noted in the third objective point 4. KD advised that some information had been mentioned</p>		

		<p>in a committee or RGB meeting, as everyone on the Board is a chair on one of the committee's, need to refocus on writing reports to the Board to ensure the key things the Board needs to know.</p> <p>Point 6: Exec have been looking at this, LM produced the new issues register (in supporting documents) live document, current issues that the Trust are facing.</p> <p>MF advised that he felt this was a good idea, stops the lack of communication for a long period of time, regular communication is a good way forward.</p> <p>Kelly asked the Board, what do you think of the development plan and how do you agree with it as a Board?</p> <p>GN thanked KD for the hard work.</p> <p>Q: Register is really good, will there be an interim update coming through? A: KD: Update every first Wednesday of every month, then in addition the papers will go to the Board.</p> <p>LM mentioned the reason we need to have a Lead Executive member against each of the issues, you should feel comfortable to contact that member to discuss any significant issues.</p> <p>SG: Proposer GN: Seconder GN asked for the approval from the Board for the plan. Approval was given by all Board members.</p>		
8.	Articles of Association	<p>KD advised the Board it has been in place since 2016, most years these are updated, but it is not compulsory, but the EFSA could force this, especially when we convert, but would like to extend the membership of the Board, we would need to change our articles, would not want to be in a position where the EFAS forced this. Nothing that will have significant impact, slightly tweak AGM.</p> <p>JS entered the meeting at 18:19pm</p> <p>GN advised the Board that he has viewed all the changes and suggested that the Board should approve.</p> <p>SG: Proposer GN: Seconder Board approved recommendations</p>		

		<p>Q: Will these need to go to members to be approved, Board happy for this to go to DfE A: KD: The Board have to sign off before going to the DfE, final acceptance then needs to go to members, could take around 2/3 months.</p> <p>GN welcomed JS to the board and advised that the Board had approved her appointment.</p>		
9.	TPA Significant Change Request	<p>LM discussed with the Board Penhale School to take on the 16 pupils for additional needs/SEN, Rainbow provision, two phased approach, pupils from Penhale are from reception up to year 4, provision from year 5 - year 11. Working with local authority to agree that the building is fit for purpose, a few alterations, but this will be funded by the local authority. Looking to admit pupils from September 2022, need to amend funding agreement that we have for Portsmouth Academy, currently this limits the number of pupils but looking to expand this to another 32 pupils, looking to go out and consult. The Board needs to advise that they are happy for consultation to take place with the strategy stake holders. Result of consultation will come back in December for the Board to make a final decision. The decision to be made is the Board to agree to move this forward with the next stage and go to consultation.</p> <p>SG: Proposer GN: Seconder The Board agreed unanimously.</p>		
10.	Communication to Governors & Stakeholders	<p>KD advised that message to Governors in the support of the schools for preparation of Ofsted. Ask PM on behalf of the Board to thank everyone for the 1:1 project and when the official Ofsted reports received PM, on behalf of the Board, to write to the schools and the leadership team to thank them.</p> <p>KD asked when is the right time to communicate the Total Education Strategy to Governors. A: SG: Advised that it is around the Board and Executive team recognising the work that we do as schools.</p> <p>Q: Can we ask what communication the RGB would want? A: KD advised that this will be in the Board report and ask for feedback, KD to bring back to the next board meeting.</p>		
	AOB & Correspondence to the Chair	<p>GN discussed briefly the Safeguarding concern for Goodwin, EFSA letter has advised that the matter was closed. Letter from EFSA to PM regarding a complaint around Safeguarding at New Horizons, response in progress. KD advised that a response letter went out the day the letter was received from the EFSA.</p>		

Q: How do the Board feel about the complaints, are we set up correctly, are the Board satisfied that we have enough robust processes in place?

A: LR: None of the complaints have proved a problem, as we have all the procedures in place.

LM advised that we do have a quite robust quality assurance process in place that looks at Safeguarding as a key focus, on an annual basis with every school, that is reported through to the Quality Assurance Committee.

Update on Maritime:

LM updated the Board advising that they have an open evening tonight, secured over 200 places at the school, currently oversubscribed. Planning consent was given by Medway in August, consent led to an identification of a temporary site, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

LM gave an update on RGS and the significantly delays on staffing resources for the contractors and resourcing of materials. Met with contractors and have now have an updated programme. The Art and DT block will be handed over by December, sports hall by end of March.

Q: Is there any financial penalty for the delay in the contract?

A: LM: Intention to charge £2,500 from January for delays.

MF left the meeting at 18:45pm

[REDACTED]

		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Q: Is this likely to be the subject of any comment by the auditors in our accounts this year? A: LM: Yes, updated disclosure around that.</p>		
	Items for next agenda	<p>GN advised that going forward will be asking committee chairs for any items of other business. GN asked the Board for any items.</p> <p>DM: Maritime, possibly on-going agenda item.</p> <p>Q: Deferred discussion on arrangements for TSfE, will you be in a position to bring to the next board meeting A: LM: TSfE Board are meeting first week of November, paper and business proposal for the meeting, subject to the TSfE Board approving, will bring it to the TSAT Board in December.</p> <p>DL thanked SG, LM and the Trust, everyone is aware of the unfortunate passing of a pupil at TPA, feedback from the school is that they could not have got through this without the Trust. Thanks to RG and the Trust as a whole.</p> <p>KD added to ask the Operations committee, to look at the 20% not taking up the 1:1 device scheme and feedback to the board.</p> <p>Board agreed.</p>		
	Date of next meeting	<p>15th December 2021 at 5pm</p> <p>Meeting closed at 18:55pm</p>		