

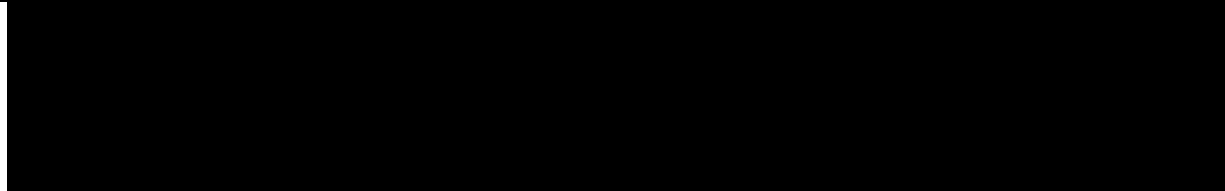
THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST
COMPANY NUMBER: 7359755

Subject	Meeting of the Board of Directors	Date	29 th March 2023
Room	TSAT boardroom & Via Teams Call	Time	5pm
Present	Gerard Newman (GN) (Chair), Stuart Gardner (SG), Derek Morrison (DM), Kaye Bettey (KB), Peter Martin (PM), Natasha Hurtado (NH), Clive Star (CS), Steve Geary (SGY), Ian Mason (IM)	Clerk	Jennifer Coates
Apologies accepted	Natalie Sheppard, Julie Spurgeon, Kelly Denton, Lisa Keslake, Michael Bailey	In attendance	Lee Miller (LM), Dan High (DH), Jody Murphy (JM), Mandy Gage (MG)

Key Points Discussed and Action Items				
No.	Agenda Item	Action/Discussion	By whom	When
1.	Declaration of business interests	There were no further declarations of interest. Under the review of current Declarations of Business Interest, PM said that he is no longer Chair of the Medway Youth Trust and that can be removed.		
2.	Welcome and apologies for absence	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Natalie Sheppard, Julie Spurgeon, Kelly Denton, Michael Bailey & Lisa Keslake.		
3.	Minutes and matters arising	The board reviewed the two sets of minutes for consideration: <u>Board Minutes 14th December 2022</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication on interrogating questions has been completed. - Governors to send evidence of previous equality and diversity training is ongoing. <p><i>The board unanimously approved the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.</i></p>		

		<p><u>Extra-ordinary Board Minutes 16th March 2023</u> <i>The board unanimously approved the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.</i></p>		
4.	CEO Report	<p>SG presented the CEO report which contained the following key information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SG thanked the Executive Team for their work over last 3 months. We are really pleased that NS has returned to work this week. - Given the current pressure on the Executive Team, there are some delays in the ability to deliver everything from the Trust Improvement Plan this academic year. This includes developing carousel and learning plans, and Rachel Grey is supporting at TPA – which has had the effect of reducing capacity for total education reporting. Also, the Trust of Choice and Thinking Horizons has been paused, including the MAT meet, and subject primary lead meetings. Will be able to move forward in most other areas. - Ofsted – RGS and Victory graded as Good in recent inspections. Penbridge ungraded inspection maintained Good. <div data-bbox="633 730 1812 1046" style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 100%; margin: 10px 0;"></div> <p>SG then summarised the key points in the remainder of his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Congratulations to JM & MG on their appointments. DoE recruitment for South East is in progress. - School improvement process is in process. - KS2 Maths continues to be a challenge. Early indication indicates that Maths continues to be a problem. There have been improvements across the organisation in respect of attainment, but progress is still not strong enough. Battle plans in place for May SATS. 		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KS4 performance term 2 positions. We knew the students were in this position at end of Year 10. We are expecting an improvement from last academic year but not where we would like the results to be. Further updates will come through the Curriculum & QA committee that the Year 10s are where they need to be in respect of performance in by the end of the year. 		
5.	<p>Due Diligence for Bay Education Trust, The Burton Academy & Colchester Royal Grammar School</p>	<p>LM presented the due diligence reports which contained the following key information:</p> <p><u>Bay Education Trust</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MAT situated in Paignton area of Torbay. 3 schools which include a secondary school Paignton Academy, Curledge Street primary and Kings Ash primary. The three schools are very close together and not far from Brixham and Furzeham. - Paignton Academy operates over 3 sites. One of these includes a special school resource provision for high needs pupils. It has a large PAN of 320 and splits it cohorts over three sites. - They have an established central function, as they were on the journey to grow and be a bigger MAT with their central service in place. <div data-bbox="633 762 1850 890" style="background-color: black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>Governor Q - Are the 2 primary schools feeder schools to secondary? LM A - Yes, they virtually all go to the secondary but some go to grammar.</p> <p>Governor Q - Are the 2 primary schools full on their PAN? LM A - No they are not – Torbay as a whole has seen lower pupil numbers coming through primary.</p> <div data-bbox="633 1142 1850 1393" style="background-color: black; height: 157px; width: 100%;"></div>		



- Ofsted positions – Paignton Academy is “RI”, and both primaries are "Good" but those positions are vulnerable and are due Ofsted inspections imminently.
- Another key priority for them is around the school improvement model and we have demonstrated school improvement in as part of that offer.

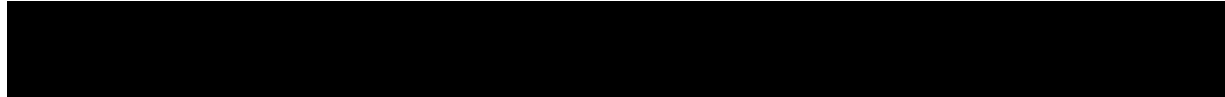
3 key elements

1. Voice at the Board
2. Relationship with South Devon College remains intact and promote that.
3. Embed a more developed school improvement culture and support mechanism to help the schools maintain or get to “Good”.

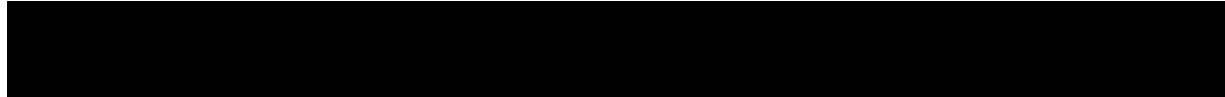
A vote was conducted via a show of hands and there was unanimous agreement for BET to join the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.

Burton Academy

- Provides an Alternative Provision (PRU) situated near Paignton Academy and has 55 pupils across KS3 and KS4. They are currently part of a MAT called Catch 22 which has 7 other Academies around the country.
- There have been no issues highlighted from their due diligence.



- They will make a good addition to our Trust portfolio of skills.



		<p><i>A vote was conducted via a show of hands and there was unanimous agreement for Burton to join the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.</i></p> <p><u>Colchester Royal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The arrangement will be different to other schools. They will not buy into services from TSAT and have a 'pay as you use' service rather than a full partnership agreement, as we do not have staff in the area to provide support. This may change over time, but to start with it will be a simpler model where we provide oversight and challenge from SG, LM and some elements of our teams to work with them. <p>We have completed the due diligence and the following key findings are:</p> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 150px; margin: 10px 0;"></div> <p><i>A vote was conducted via a show of hands and there was unanimous agreement for Colchester Royal Grammar School to join the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.</i></p>		
6.	Reports from Committees	<p>Chairs of each Committee presented the reports from the committees which contained the following key information:</p> <p>A. <u>Curriculum and Quality Assurance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns around Year 6 Maths and Year 11 Overall Outcomes. - Challenges across Trust with Maths. - Year 11 non-selective outcomes judged below national. - Meon Infant and Goodwin RI Ofsted judgements. - Year 10 battle plans have begun. - Positive QA visit to Maritime Academy. <p>B. <u>Finance</u></p>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academy level budget position has improved. Forecast deficit for the year is £300k less than previously. - Noted risk of ongoing cost pressures in relation to staff pay and whether any increases will be partly or fully funded by the Government. - One of the Committee members has been absent for 4 consecutive meetings, and removal is proposed at today's meeting. <p>C. <u>Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conversation about the funding model for 1-1 devices at Maritime and TPA, no decision made at this time. - Risk of Maritime not being ready for 2024. Building has begun. - Concern about costs for the sustainability strategy. - Cost increases for construction and I.T. equipment. - Concerned about stress on I.T. with a lot on, and concern about what they are going to be able to deliver by September with the amount of school onboarding. <p>D. <u>Staffing, Pay and Professional Growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We approved procurement of new recruitment system, subject to review of functionality which has now been concluded satisfactorily. - Approved the cost for the investors in people certification. - Approved the new executive structure which went to board on 16th March. <div style="background-color: black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing strike action is being managed effectively - Potential threat of strike action at [REDACTED] in relation to hours worked. <p>E. <u>Audit and Risk</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreed fee and timetable with external auditors UHY and members approved UHY to continue as our auditors. - Completed an Internal audit report with company TSO education. There were concerns raised on the quality of their review, and DH is discussing a potential revisit to provide further assurance. - Data protection training is 100% compliant in most schools. - Data breach in February regarding [REDACTED]. The ICO confirmed there was no further action needed and actions are in place to mitigate the risk. It was a positive endorsement from the ICO that the steps we had were robust. <p>F. <u>Governance and Compliance</u></p>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion about behaviour and safeguarding issues at TPA. The executive team and school leaders are very focussed on addressing this. - Some concerns raised about lack of strength in governance structures and procedures in the South West. There are some notable exceptions and important to bear in mind that many individuals are new to their roles. Thanks to Peter who has agreed to join South West RGB to provide support and mentoring. - Concerns raised about continuing issues in safer recruitment and SCR checks in certain schools. Governors have an important role to play in terms of those procedures and documenting review. Before any likely Ofsted, Governors visits must complete a safeguarding and SCR review and report. - Board to note we are proposing to set up a new committee which will be Culture and Development Committee. This will provide governance to the new executive role and also the process of onboarding new schools. <p><u>Governor appointments and removals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Appointment of Khuzamah Ghanem, Maritime IMB parent governor. ➤ Removal of Alex Jackson from the Finance Committee. ➤ Removal of Louise Agley from the Cedar AAB. ➤ Removal of Hannane Ford from the New Horizons Childrens Academy AAB. ➤ Removal of Pat Wozencroft from the All Faiths AAB subject to a final attempt at contact. ➤ Removal of Lee Cavaliere from the Goodwin AAB subject to a final attempt of support to complete the mandatory training. <p><i>A vote was conducted via show of hands and there was unanimous approval for the Governor appointment and removal decisions.</i></p> <p>G. <u>Pupil Voice Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Board were very strong in their support for development of Pupil Voice in the Trust. Simon Underdown has led on this and there has been a cross Trust group which has now met twice to discuss views. - Discussions are grouped to – i) taking care of our planet, ii) food, iii) learning and iv) charity. In summary there is a great enthusiasm from the students with their initiatives and a good mix of suggestions which are consistent with our strategy including our green agenda. - We as a Board and Executive need to match that enthusiasm and energy by ensuring we implement their ideas. I also suggest this is a standing item on the Board agenda in terms of progress on this. - Directors offered their thanks and congratulations to team and staff involved in this. 		
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		<p>Governor Q – On the pupil voice there were a number of actions, how do we make sure the tracking of those actions is maintained?</p> <p>LM A – Kelly will make sure she is tracking the actions and will coordinate that. I have been emphasising with my team, that there should be a quick response and action.</p>		
7.	ROIs from RGBs	<p>JC presented the Risks, Opportunities and Issues which contained the following key information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portsmouth RGB feedback on the Equality policy has been passed to the relevant staff in the Trust to address. - Portsmouth RGB questions about touch screen filtering and monitoring to be passed to I.T. <p>Governor comment – At the Kent RGB, JM stepped in due to the absence of the Kent DoE, and didn't have a DOE report and the general consensus is that it was positively received and Governors enjoyed interacting with the Heads directly in respect of progress and issues in their respecting schools.</p> <p>SG feedback – This has been the general feedback from RGBs where DOE reports have not been produced (due to the pressure on the Executive Leaders over the last few months). It had been good to receive these in the past, but perhaps served their purpose at the time, but are not required now.</p>		
8.	Communication from the Board to the Trust Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Congratulations to those involved in the Pupil Voice initiative - Communication about the importance of Governor safeguarding and SCR visits prior to an inspection and highlighting the resources available to support these visits. 		
9.	AOB & Correspondence to the Chair	<p>GN presented the correspondence to the Chair which contained the following key information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Portsmouth Academy complaint regarding safeguarding has been responded to and closed with the ESFA. - Academy Notification of Coasting letter to Goodwin Academy following a double RI judgement. A response has been sent to the DfE. <div style="background-color: black; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"></div>		

10.	Items for next agenda	Pupil Voice Committee including tracking and progress of actions as a standing agenda item. Other items to be identified with the Chair prior to the next meeting.		
11.	Date of next meeting	Strategic Board Meeting Wednesday 3 rd May 2023 11-4 Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday 12 th July 2023 The meeting closed at 7.10pm.		