

**ABBAY ACADEMIES TRUST
TRUST BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
THURSDAY 7TH MARCH 2024, 5.00 P.M.
AT BAPA**

Present: Stephen Haigh, Chair of Trustees (SH); Sarah Moore, CEO (SM); Chris Bates, Trustee (CB); Paul Gandy, Trustee (PG); Stephen Farnaby, Trustee (SF); Philip Brierley, Trustee (PBr); Amelia Eggleston, Trustee (AE); Jill Bates, Clerk (JB)

Apologies: All present

		Action
1	Welcome & Prayer SH welcomed all to the meeting. CB said a prayer.	
2	Apologies All present.	
3	Declarations of Interest None declared.	
4	Minutes of the Trust Board meeting Wednesday 29th November 2023 and agreed as a true record Agreed as a true record and signed off as such.	
5	<p>Matters arising from the minutes of the Trust Board Meeting 29th November 2023 All completed or appear later on the agenda except:</p> <p>Item 5 Page 2 Q. A trustee asked if AAT has enquired whether the sharp rise in numbers on roll at CSW meets the DfE threshold for a partial in-year funding allocation. The numbers on roll represent a 17% increase. A. SM undertook to contact Kathryn Harrison at the DfE to enquire. Update 29th November 2023 – SM has already updated trustees by email but to confirm she has explored funding through the DfE and LA but has been unsuccessful as the view is that this is simply the effect of lagged funding. AE has offered to try alternative funding streams through her contacts. Update 7th March 2024 – AE reported that she had tried alternative contacts but had been unsuccessful.</p> <p>Item 7 Page 3 Trust Board Given that it is unlikely that there will be incumbents at either CSW Church or Bourne Abbey it was agreed that JB will contact Sue Edgar, Governance & Compliance Lead at the Diocese for support in filling these vacancies. Update 4th March 2024 – since the last meeting Fr Stephen Buckman was announced as the new vicar of Bourne and his licensing service was held last week. Additionally, the Diocese has recently issued updated guidance regarding the appointment of Foundation trustees/governors. JB will continue to progress.</p>	JB continue to progress appt of Foundation trustees

	<p>BAP Trustees were asked to think about members of the community who could be considered for the vacancy. Update 7th March 2024 – PG has suggested a possible candidate to SM. SM will progress.</p> <p>Item 10 Page 4 Church SEF documents and updated SIAMs schedule The new Church SEFs are being written following SIAMs training undertaken at the beginning of November. These will be shared with trustees in January 2024. Update 7th March 2024 – Megan Shears (Director of Curriculum & Standards), Alison Simpson (Director of Church Distinctiveness) and Louise Jordan (HoS – CSW) have worked hard to create a draft new Church SEF for BEPPA which is the next school in the Trust due for a SIAMs inspection. The draft has been sent to Gillian Georgiou at the Diocese for her feedback and will be shared with trustees and govts at the summer meeting.</p> <p>RE and Collective Worship statutory checks Louise Jordan (LJ) and Alison Simpson (AS) will be contacting trustees/govts about completion of the checks for CSW and the Bourne schools respectively. Update 7th March 2024 – checks completed. To be completed again at the end of Term 4.</p> <p>Item 16 Page 7 Food Standards JB had asked Alison Coates of the Food in Schools team to review the menus used by our Kids' Clubs and Abbey Ark. Alison had given some constructive feedback which had been passed on to the relevant teams. Changes are to be in place by the beginning of Term 3 to allow for stock to be used up. Update 7th March 2024 – JB advised all required changes have been implemented.</p> <p>Item 18 Page 8 Governor/Trustee open mornings Our recent open morning had been cancelled due to lack of support. As a trust we recognise that it is not always easy for trustees and govts to come to school during the day as they all have busy lives. It is important to us that we get this right and at the moment we are not doing so.</p> <p>A gov has suggested that instead of the trust planning the dates in, it would be helpful if govts are offered a range of dates to choose from to ensure open mornings are held when maximum attendance can be achieved. SM/JB will therefore propose some dates to choose from. Update 7th March 2024 – dates to be identified.</p>	<p>SM progress PG's suggestion</p> <p>SLT share Church SEF at summer meetings</p> <p>LJ/AS to liaise with link govts to complete checks</p> <p>SM/JB identify dates and contact trustees/ govts</p>
6	<p>Items from the minutes of the AGM 29th November 2023 The minutes have not yet been ratified but SM reminded trustees that the following had been discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The auditors had given the Trust's accounts a clean bill of health • Azets were reappointed as the Trust's auditors. Jane Parsons had completed a value for money benchmarking exercise and trustees will continue to review best value • Members had suggested they introduce mid-term meetings • New Church articles of association will be introduced at the appropriate time – when the Trust takes on another school 	

7	<p>Issues from the Local Board meetings</p> <p>i. Colsterworth 1st February 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding/budget • Pupil numbers – current and future • The new RSE policy and consultation process • Standards • Review of the LGB membership • Attendance • Staff appraisals • New AAT website • Term 3 SCR check • New LA online safeguarding audit • School uniform <p>ii. Bourne Abbey 6th February 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding/budget • Pupil numbers – current and future • The new RSE policy and consultation process • Standards • Review of the LGB membership • Attendance • Staff appraisals • New AAT website • Term 3 SCR check • New LA online safeguarding audit • New DfE staff workload guidance <p>iii. Bourne Elsea Park 21st February 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding/budget • Pupil numbers – current and future and particularly the number of first choices for R2024 (see also confidential minutes) • The new RSE policy and consultation process • Standards • Welcomed two new parent governors – Emily Anniss-Woods and Emily Giddings • Attendance • Staff appraisals • New AAT website • Term 3 SCR check • New LA online safeguarding audit • New DfE staff workload guidance • Staffing inc Peter Bellamy (Exec Head) and Andy Whiteway (Acting Head of School) 	
8	<p>Review of Trust Board membership and Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>i. Foundation Trustee vacancies x 2 It is hoped that the new Vicar of Bourne, Fr Stephen, will join AAT as a Trustee. JB to liaise with the Diocese to ensure correct process is followed</p> <p>ii. BEPPA parent governor election outcome Two nominations were received for two vacancies which meant that there was no need for an election. Emily Anniss-Woods and Emily Giddings have been through their induction, had a tour of the school and attended their first meeting on 21st February 2024.</p>	<p>JB to progress with Diocese</p>

	<p>ii. AAT Trust Growth SM advised that we continue to be approached by the DfE and the Diocese to support schools. However, at present, we do not have the capacity to do so. Our priority is to ensure that the 3 schools already in our trust continue to do thrive.</p> <p>iii. Funding from new housing update AE had tried to find out further details about possible s106 funding which might be available to CSW as part of the new housing development but had been unsuccessful. She will seek an alternative contact at the LA.</p> <p>iv. SEND and PP spending updates for each school Trustees had received these electronically with the LGB meeting document packs and they had been discussed at the LGB meetings.</p> <p>v. Projected Reception numbers for Reception 2024-25 and BEPPA potential impact on budget See confidential minutes.</p> <p>vi. Pupil numbers Colsterworth Already covered.</p> <p>vii. CIF Update Bids have been submitted for drainage and fire doors at Bourne Abbey. The work required on fire doors at CSW did not meet the threshold for a bid.</p> <p>Current roofing work at BAPA is progressing well and is due to be completed over the Easter holidays. CIF funding payments have been slow to be issued this year which has impacted our cashflow situation.</p>	<p>AE seek alternative LA contact</p> <p>SM/JB/JP progress work required at CSW</p>
10	<p>Church Distinctiveness</p> <p>i. Church SEF documents and updated SIAMs schedule Already covered under item 5.</p> <p>ii. RE and Collective Worship statutory checks Already covered under item 5.</p> <p>iii. New Vicar at Bourne – Revd. Fr Stephen Buckman SM had been unable to attend Fr Stephen’s Licensing service due to her operation but thanked JB, Paul Houghton (Acting HoS BAPA) and Andy Whiteway (Acting HoS BEPPA) for representing the trust. Fr Stephen is keen to visit our schools and we are making arrangements for him to do that as soon as possible.</p> <p>iv. Archdeacon Justine and Paul Thompson visit January 2024 Archdeacon Justine and Paul Thompson, Diocesan Director of Education (PT) had visited the trust in January. We had taken the decision that they should visit CSW so that we could demonstrate the impact that AAT has been able to have on the school. Both visitors were extremely complimentary about the trust and remain keen for AAT to grow.</p>	
11	<p>Mental Health and Well-being</p> <p>i. Update on provision for pupils and staff Our MH&WB first aiders continue to support children and staff. Action plans are in place. These remain fluid – some children are added for short term support and then removed whilst others may receive more long-term support. Children are very clear about who the MH&WB first aiders are and who the pupil Well-being Warriors are that they can go to.</p>	

	<p>Well-being questions will be included in the staff questionnaires which will be issued at BEPPA and CSW in the Autumn term.</p> <p>We have also taken the decision to buy into the LA Employee Support and Counselling Service for next academic year.</p> <p>Q Q. A trustee remembered the feeling of well-being that English Country Dancing can bring and asked if schools offer that for pupils. A. SM advised that we don't at present but undertook to investigate the idea.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ii. Attendance</p> <p>SM reminded trustees of the LA feedback we received:</p> <p>In January 2024 Bourne Abbey and Bourne Elsea Park completed a Termly Attendance Support Meeting with Carol Harrison, Safeguarding and Education Welfare Officer for LCC. In her feedback Carol wrote: 'You can clearly see all the hard work you are putting into the schools which is evidenced by your figures. It is refreshing to have a Primary(s) that track attendance and are as vigilant as you are, as you mostly see this approach in secondary schools. Its lovely to work with schools like yours who work tirelessly to improve outcomes.' Carol acknowledged that this is Trust-wide practice.</p> <p>We continue to monitor attendance closely at all 3 schools and if figures dip, we always know why. We also consider what our figures would be like without particular persistent absentee families for whom we have either social care or Early Help involvement. At BAPA we currently have 3 such families. Although they have now left the school due to relocation, we are also aware of the impact of our refugee children's attendance on our overall figures at CSW. Attendance for different groups of pupils is also regularly reviewed – SEND; disadvantaged; LAC/PLAC; girls/boys etc.</p> <p>Q Q. A trustee asked why, as a trust, AAT has never fined families who take pupils out of school for unauthorised reasons. A. SM expressed the view that if we maintain our positive, robust approach to attendance there should be no need to take that step. We have a sound process which begins with a conversation with the class teacher, then leaders and follow-up letters as needed. SLT discussions with parents/carers may include the possibility of school referring families to the Customer Care team or other external agencies.</p> <p>Additionally, any fines imposed are usually less than the amount a family can save by going on holiday in term time and are therefore not a deterrent.</p> <p>All 3 schools' Ofsted inspections judged our attendance to be good and our systems to be robust.</p> <p>We have one family for whom we are considering prosecution. This follows social care, police and the LA Legal team involvement.</p> <p>Q Q. A trustee asked when the LA steps in. A. SM advised that we do use the EWO and the LA also support when we get to a point where we might, on the solicitor's advice, instruct the Legal team to prosecute.</p>	<p>SLT ensure W-B questions included</p> <p>SM investigate Country Dancing</p>
12	<p>Growth Strategy including AAT website Growth strategy already covered.</p>	

	<p>The AAT website is live although there are still some glitches to resolve with the developers.</p> <p>SM asked JB to share the link with trustees and with Paul Thompson, Diocesan Director of Education.</p>	<p>JB share AAT website link</p>
13	<p>Staffing Discussed as the last agenda item – see confidential minutes.</p>	
14	<p>Health & Safety</p> <p>i. NCC Audit Audit scheduled at CSW in Term 6. Key points will be shared for Trust-wide best practice.</p> <p>ii. Governor H&S visits - feedback Spring term visits were completed at all 3 schools. Summer term visits to be arranged.</p>	<p>SLT/Sen Admin arrange with govs</p>
15	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>i. Dissemination of information from LA briefing for Designated Safeguarding Leads There was nothing new to share from the last update.</p> <p>SM advised that the LA will complete a safeguarding audit at CSW on 1st May 2024. We will share the outputs and actions from that audit across the trust. We will share our redesigned 6-year pathway with the LA safeguarding team when they visit.</p> <p>ii. SCR check Check was completed in Term 3. The next one will be scheduled for Term 5, shortly after SLT/DSLs/Admin have attended virtual Carolyn Eyre SCR course on 22nd April 2024.</p> <p>iii. Trustee/Governor safeguarding visits feedback Visits had been completed for BAPA and CSW. SF had to postpone his visit due to unforeseen personal circumstances and this will be rearranged before the end of this term.</p> <p>iv. Trustee/Governor visibility in schools SM took the opportunity to thank trustees for spending time in our schools when they can, it is very much appreciated.</p> <p>In the summer term each school will hold a Collective Worship to highlight the role of trustees and govs and raise their profile with staff and children.</p>	<p>SLT share outputs</p> <p>SM share 6-year pathway with LA</p> <p>JB book SCR check Term 5</p> <p>SF liaise with Andy Whiteway</p> <p>SLT arrange CWs</p>
16	<p>Governor visits and training</p> <p>i. Governor/Trustee open mornings 2023-24 Already covered.</p> <p>ii. Training governor update and training priorities The trust does not currently have a training gov. JB continues to share training opportunities with trustees and govs.</p> <p>JB drew trustees' attention to the NGA 'Governing a Multi Academy Trust' handbook, a copy of which is available in the BAPA office for trustees to borrow.</p>	<p>Trustees borrow if they wish</p>
19	<p>Determination of confidentiality of business</p>	

	Items relating to pupils, staffing, growth strategy and finance as appropriate.	
20	Confirmation of dates for spring and summer terms: Summer – Monday 8 th July 2024 5.00 p.m.	

Meeting finished 7.10 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hayler', written in a cursive style.

Signed:

Date: 08.07.2024