

# The Priory School Trust

## Board of Trustees

held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 7th December 2016

### MINUTES

#### *Members:*

Yvonne Rimmer (YR)	<i>Chair</i>
Robert Adams (RA)	<i>Trustee</i>
Michael Barratt (MJB)	<i>Executive Principal, Trustee</i>
Nicola Bradley (NB)	<i>Co-opted</i>
Don Burgess (DB)	<i>Trustee, Finance</i>
Tim Jones (TJ)	<i>Co-opted</i>
Paul Kitchener (PK)	<i>Co-opted</i>
Peter Pack	<i>Trustee</i>
David Sidaway (DS)	<i>Trustee</i>
Eric Stannard	<i>Trustee</i>
Lisa Twidale (LT)	<i>Trustee</i>

#### *In attendance:*

Adrian Burns (AB)	<i>Clerk</i>
Sue Lovecy	<i>Head of School, St Martins</i>
Duncan Wright (DW)	<i>Finance Director</i>

#### 1 **Apologies for absence and Resignation**

*action*

There were no apologies for absence. Peter Pack was present until item 9. He explained that he had been asked to chair another local body of which he was a member and reluctantly felt obliged to resign from the Priory School Trust. He would nevertheless continue to help with the Executive Principal's forthcoming performance management review.

The Chair thanked him for his valuable work on behalf of the school and the Trust, which was warmly appreciated by the Board.

#### 2 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest in the business of the meeting.

#### 3 **Election of Vice Chair**

It was noted that, in accordance with the Articles of Association, employees of the Trust were not eligible for election as Chair or Vice Chair and that the post of Vice Chair was therefore vacant. David Sidaway being willing to stand was proposed by Robert Adams and seconded by Paul Kitchener and elected

*-elected-*

#### 4 **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2016 were approved.

*-approved-*

5 **Matters arising** (not appearing elsewhere in the agenda)

*Item*

- 3 Outstanding Registers of Business Interest and Trustee Declarations were completed.

Optional statements in the Trust's legal documents had been reviewed and details clarified by the Executive Principal with the Clerk. Examples from the Scheme of Government were noted and DS drew attention to the need to ensure that issues were discussed in detail only at the meeting with the relevant level of delegation.

TJ commented that St Martins LGB had reduced its number of KPIs and made them more focused.

The LGB Constitution was approved. The size of LGB was to be 12 members, with a quorum of one third. *-approved-*

The Clerk would check on receipt of guidance from Veale Wasbrough Vizards *AB*

The Priory School governors' DBS status had been confirmed. The Clerk would check on the status of St Martins governors. *AB*

The Executive Principal, Chair and Clerks had met to agree arrangements for minuting.

The Headteacher gave information about St Martins forthcoming Extravaganza

- 5 James Sadler and John Halliday were approved as members of the Finance Committee. *-approved-*

- 12.3 Trustees had been invited to attend The Priory School LGB if they had skills relevant to the agenda items.

- 12.4 Allison Bowen's term of office as a St Martins parent governor was due to end on 5th November 2017.

6 **Framework and Workstreams**

The Executive Principal introduced his governance framework document including workstreams for the Board and LGBs. The discussion that followed focussed on the role of the Link Governor, whose effectiveness, the Head of School said, depended on a governor's availability to come into the school. Link Governors and SLT members should agree dates for visits. It was agreed that the LGBs should decide how best to use their Link Governors to liaise with SLT members and report back to the LGB, being aware of the workstream requirements. Chairs would use their discretion as to how to deliver the reports required by the Board. It was agreed that LGBs might convene ad hoc subcommittees to consider specific local issues. *all / SLT*  
*Chairs*  
*Chairs*

NB would send the Clerk a copy of her reporting format for sharing with Link Governors as a model of St Martins practice. *NB / AB*

Trustees were encouraged to visit St Martins. Information about future activities would be made available to the Board. *MJB*

The following Link Trustee appointments were made: *-appointed-*

Governance: YR, DS

Finance, Contracts, Health & Safety: DS, DB  
Curriculum & Standards: YR, LT, NB (Primary), PK (Secondary)  
SEND: RA  
Safeguarding: LT  
Admissions: YR

Behaviour and Pupil Matters responsibilities were not yet allocated.

## 7 **Update on Schools' Performance**

The Principal's and Head of School's reports and supporting papers were noted. It was agreed that the content of the reports was to be determined by the Board.

by exception, so that the Board's attention was drawn to failures to meet targets, using RAG ratings where appropriate. It was agreed that the detail of the Heads' reports was for discussion by the LGBs rather than the Board.

The Executive Principal undertook to propose KPIs to the next meeting.

*MJB*

School dashboards would include Health & Safety issues and Trust complaints. Detailed data would be reported to the LGBs with summary information coming to the Board via the dashboards.

*DW / MJB*

*MJB*

The Head of School highlighted aspects of her report, referring to the small number of pupils in the higher ability band but saying that she expected the Progress 8 result this year to be at least as good as last year's (at -0.11) and possibly close to zero. Behaviour had improved since Year 7.

The Executive Principal reported on actions taken in the first term to support St Martins through intervention in English and assistance with planning in both English and Maths. The data manager was responding quickly to support in target setting and use of data. A teacher would come to the Priory School to work on behaviour management and an external teacher had been commissioned to go to St Martins to focus on the teaching of theory in GCSE PE. One teacher was going through the capability procedure.

St Martins had received 47 first preference external applications for Year 7 places in September 2017, in addition to the 28 Year 6 pupils currently at the school. The intake could be as high as 80 pupils. Feedback from the parents' evening had been positive. Funding next year would fall because of the lagged census based formula but the Head of School reassured the Board that no additional teachers would be needed.

The Priory School had not received as many first preference applications as the previous year (215 vs 230) but the total of first to third preferences was over 500.

TJ asked what the impact of the change had been on staff at the Priory School. The Executive Principal said that the backfill had been successful and the changes in job descriptions had been positively received.

## 8 **St Martins Swimming Pool**

The Head of School's report on a recent incident in the pool was noted.

She explained that the Health & Safety executive and ambulance crew had said the incident had been handled well and the school was compliant with Health & Safety standards. The school had sought advice from the Local

Authority since the incident and the recommended actions had been completed. The pool would be reopened for lessons in the Spring term. It had already been reopened for hirers. In response to a question from DB the Head of School said responsibility hirers' events lay with the hirers.

DB undertook to scrutinise St Martins action plan for the Board.

*DB*

## 9 **Trust Operational Matters**

The Executive Principal reported that gold membership of the National Governors' Association had been entered into, covering both schools. He would

produce

*MJB*

Trust wide policies for scrutiny by Link Governors during the forthcoming months. A Trust website had been created in draft: he would have editorial rights to make detailed changes.

He had had discussions with other schools which are summarised in a confidential minute.

*MJB*

## 10 **Trust Financial Matters**

- .1 The Finance Director's Post Audit Note was noted. He made a short presentation on the outcome of the audit. He highlighted deferred income adjustments and the fact that donations in the year to August 2016 included £203k to restricted funds, being the required accounting treatment of funds received in respect of the the Teaching School Alliance. The pension deficit had increased from £1.2m to £2.1m, leading to a £2k per annum increase in payments. Net current assets at £801k were healthy.

The Financial Statements for the year to 31st August 2016 were approved for signature by the Chair.

*-approved-*

- .2 The Finance Director's proposed LGPS discretions statement was approved.

*-approved-*

## 11 **Recommendations from Local Governing Bodies**

Recommendations from the recent LGB meetings were considered as follows:

- .1 *The Priory School - 29th November 2016*

Carolyn Freeman, Dean Garratt, James Sadler and Samantha Salt were appointed to the Priory School LGB with immediate effect.

*-appointed-*

The appointments of Link Governors were approved.

*-approved-*

The new curriculum proposals were approved.

*-approved-*

It was agreed that induction materials should be available for new trustees and governors. They should include minutes of meetings, the framework document, the articles of association, the scheme of governance and other documents relevant to their roles and school. Visits to the schools and discussion with leaders should be part of the induction process.

*MJB / YR /  
Clerk*

- .2 *St Martins School - 30th November 2016*

The new curriculum proposals were approved.

*-approved-*

It was agreed that where votes were taken on LGB recommendations the outcome of the votes should be recorded in the minutes to inform Board decisions.

*Clerks*

- 12      **Risk Registers**
- The Executive Principal reported that Risk Registers were in place for both schools which had been considered by their LGBs and accepted as working documents. Categorisation of items in the registers would be introduced. There was no Risk Register yet for the Trust, but a draft would be prepared for the next meeting. *MJB / DW*
- 13      **Educational Landscape**
- The Executive Principal introduced his paper on the Educational Landscape, summarising his views on major issues facing schools over the next three years. Trustees were invited to consider the document and let him have their comments before discussion at the next meetings of the Board and LGBs. He also asked Chairs to have their LGBs discuss the principle of selection in case it became an issue locally. *all*  
*MJB / Clerks*  
*Chairs*
- The Head of School expressed her concern about the risk of delay to the introduction of Fairer Funding. RA commented on changes in the political agenda and looked forward to receiving regular information from the Executive Principal.
- 14      **Maths Block**
- A contribution of £300k from school funds had been recommended by the Finance Committee towards the proposed funding bid for a new Maths block at the Priory School. This amount represented 50% of the £600k cost which the architect had been asked to achieve in his design. The recommendation was approved. The Finance Director would meet DB for scrutiny of the bid before submission. *-approved-*  
*DW / DB*
- 15      **Social Media**
- NB raised the issue of photography of children in the light of parental videos recorded at the recent children's performance at St Martins. The risk had been mitigated by asking parents to sign to say they would not upload videos to social media, but the matter needed further consideration and a policy decision. Link governors were asked to discuss it with the staff member responsible for safeguarding. RA undertook to research guidance on good practice. *Link gobs*  
*LT / RA*
- 16      **Date of next meeting**
- The next meeting of the Board would be held at 7.45 pm on Thursday 9th February 2017 (after the Finance Committee).
- The current version of the calendar for the academic year (vR8P) was noted.

## Summary of actions arising:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Owner</i>
6	Check receipt of clerking guidance from VWV	AB
	Check St Martins governors' DBS status	AB
	Link governors and SLT members to agree dates for visits	all / SLT
	Delegation to LGBs to include (1) how to use Link governors for liaison with SLT; (2) freedom to decide if they want ad hoc subcommittees; and (3) Chair's discretion as to how to deliver the reports the Board requires, including link governor reports (but NB's exemplar to be shared with both LGBs)	YR / TJ / Clerks
	Trustees to visit St Martins. Information about future activities to be taken to Board	NB / AB
		MJB
7	LGBs to report by exception to failures to meet targets. Detail of Heads' reports to be discussed at LGB level.	Chairs
	Executive Principal to propose KPIs to next meeting.	MJB
	Dashboards to include Health & Safety and Trust complaints.	DW / MJB
	School performance detailed data to be reported to LGBs, summary to Board via dashboard	MJB
8	Scrutinise St Martins pool action plan	DB
9	Draw governors' attention to NGA membership; prepare policies for scrutiny by Link governors.	MJB
	Due diligence on prospective additional Trust schools approved	MJB
11	Outcome of voting on LGB matters to be reported in minutes to inform Board decisions on recommendations	Clerks
	Induction packs to be prepared for Board and schools	MJB / YR / Clerk
12	Prepare Trust Risk Register for next meeting	MJB / DW
13	Governors to consider Educational Landscape document and comment to MJB. Discuss at next meeting.	all / Clerk
14	Local governors to discuss selection	Chairs / Clerks
	Finance Director to meet DB to review Maths block bid	DW / DB
	Risk of photographs on social media: Link governors to discuss with staff member responsible for safeguarding. RA to advise.	Link gvs / LT / RA