



CHAIR'S SHARES

It's been so wonderful to visit many of our schools over the last two terms and meet our pupil parliament members. I've joined Warren on a number of occasions now – with more visits planned for the summer term – and I've been so impressed by the confidence of our pupils in sharing their thoughts and ideas, supported by staff who know them really well and who work really hard to get the very best out of them.

It was also a real positive for the Board to hear about the Nexus-wide conference that took place in late February. It's no mean feat to bring c1,400 adults together in one place, but the conference has been reported as a really successful venture (yet again), with a strong focus on mental wellbeing and positivity. We know that our children will get a better education if the adults they are supported by are, in turn, enabled to "be the best they can be". That's our Trust vision, and our conference rightly made that the focus of the day.

As a Board, the Directors are continuing to work closely with our Chief Executive Officer to survey the evolving political and strategic landscape and consider what we can do now, and in the future, to position our schools as securely as possible. I am always a combination of grateful and excited when another school chooses to apply to join our family, and we're really looking forward to welcoming Bents Green school, the Nottingham Hospital and Home Education Learning Centre, and Seven Hills school into our Trust over the next few months. At the same time, we will be opening our first independent special school in September, Hallamshire Academy, which is yet another means by which Nexus MAT is seeking to help solve the special educational needs sufficiency crisis.

No wonder we won the inclusive MAT of the year award at the recent Multi Academy Trusts Association annual awards!

Best wishes, Rachel



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CHIEF IN BRIEF

Our Trust and schools have continued to stand up strongly to Ofsted scrutiny, with inspections in the autumn and spring terms leading to really positive feedback from the inspectorate on how our schools are governed and how hard our Trust is working to better meet the needs of the communities we serve.

CEO—Warren Carratt

Governance Underpinnings

Academy Trust Handbook Scheme of Delegation Annual Accounts Governance Handbook

For more information on the above visit www.nexusmat.org

The Skills Audit: Why is measuring your skills and experience important?

Following the Spring Academy Council meetings, governors have been asked to complete their Annual Skills Audit return. But why do we ask you to do this?

Highlighting need

Regularly reviewing your council's effectiveness means that you can quickly flag where things aren't working as they should, or where there are weaknesses in knowledge or skills. It's important to remember that effective governance is the sum of many basic tasks and duties and doing these smaller tasks well matters. Identifying manageable tasks and steps by reviewing your effectiveness means great governance doesn't need to feel overwhelming.

Developing in the role

As a governor, you'll want to make sure that you have the skills and knowledge you need and that you have access to the appropriate training to fill any gaps. The best boards contain people from a diverse range of backgrounds and with different skills, so everyone can bring something different to the board.

You might also have people on the board who have skills or experiences that you're unaware of – and you'll want to make the most of these.

By keeping a record of how various committees and councils have grown their skills, we have the got the evidence ready for any board evaluations, external reviews of governance or Ofsted visits.

What does the guidance say?

Academies: the academy trust handbook (section 1.27) sets out that established trusts should include a review of the board's composition in terms of skills, effectiveness, leadership and impact in its governance statement.

We appreciate your engagement in this process, it safeguards your school and the Trust.

Unlock Your Potential with NGA's: Learning Link

Did you know, as a Governor or Trustee, you have access to NGA's Learning Link—an invaluable resource for school governance training? Whether you're new to governance or an experienced trustee, Learning Link offers a wealth of courses designed to enhance your knowledge and skills.



What is Learning Link?

Developed by the National Governance Association (NGA), Learning Link is an online training platform providing high-quality, interactive e-learning modules tailored to school and trust governance. It covers core governance principles, safeguarding, financial oversight, and much more.

Why Should You Use It?

Flexible Learning – Complete modules at your own pace, anytime, anywhere.

Relevant & Up-to-Date – Stay informed on the latest governance expectations and best practices.

CPD Accredited – Gain certificates to support your ongoing professional development.

Next Steps

Make the most of this fantastic resource—log in today and take your governance skills to the next level! If you have any technical issues, in relation to logging in please email clerkingservices@nexusmat.org

SCHOOL IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Heatherwood Secures Residential Trip to Bendrigg for Post-16 Students

Heatherwood School's recently visited Bendrigg Trust: Residential Activity Centre; a specialist residential activity centre for disabled people, as part of a taster session ahead of an exciting opportunity for their Post-16 students.

Headteacher, Deputy Head, and a class teacher spent the last weekend in February experiencing the centre's accessible activities firsthand. Their visit confirmed what an incredible place Bendrigg is for young people with complex needs.



Thanks to successful charity funding and bursaries, Heatherwood has secured a two-night residential stay in February 2026 for their Post-16 learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). The trip, covering six students and ten staff, would typically cost over £4,000. The huge positive being families will only need to contribute £60 to secure the experience for their children.

Bendrigg Trust provides fully accessible outdoor adventure experiences, giving disabled individuals the chance to participate in activities such as climbing, canoeing, and zip-lining in a safe and inclusive environment. The upcoming trip will allow Heatherwood's Post-16 students to engage in these experiences, helping to build essential life skills. With the booking now secured, Heatherwood is looking forward to a memorable and meaningful residential stay next year.



STAFF PARLIAMENT UPDATE

Staff Parliament convened on 26 February 2025 and discussed:

Wellbeing and Schools Bill: Staff were presented with a breakdown of how the government's 'Wellbeing and Schools Bill' could impact on Trust schools. They discussed new powers for Ofsted, Local Authorities and the Department for Education.

Parental Leave Policy: The Panel got advanced sight of the Parental Leave policy with new amendments around premature births. The Trust has a new initiative to provide affected staff more support. The latest version of the policy is on the website.

Enterprise Learning Institute: The group discussed the launch and the internal CPD offer. The group discussed the information staff have received regarding the offer and outlined concerns with having to cover staff to attend these courses. The group agreed that there would be more communications about ELI and were reassured support would be provided to cover duties.

Nexus MAT wins prestigious SEND Provision Trust of the Year award

At Nexus Multi Academy Trust, we are absolutely thrilled to announce that we have been honoured with the title of SEND Provision Trust of the Year at the esteemed Multi Academy Trust Association (MATA) Awards. This is an achievement that fills us with immense pride and reflects our commitment to providing exceptional support to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).



Since our establishment in 2016, Nexus MAT has grown to encompass 17 schools across South Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. We have placed a large focus on delivering highly specialised provisions for our SEND students, ensuring that they receive the tailored support they need to excel, both in education and in life beyond the classroom. This award is a true reflection of our collective dedication to that mission. Thanks to all the Governors and Trustees that have shared this journey with us.

This incredible achievement wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering commitment of all stakeholders, and, of course, the incredible young people at the heart of our Trust.

We could not be prouder of this accomplishment. It serves as a reminder of what we can achieve together and strengthens our resolve to continue providing the very best educational experiences for every young person in our care.

Warren Carratt, CEO

"We are honoured to receive the SEND Provision Trust of the Year award. This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our incredible staff, the unwavering support of our families and, most importantly, the resilience and achievements of our young people.

"At Nexus MAT, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential and we strive to create environments where they feel safe, supported and empowered to succeed. We will continue to work hard to ensure high quality provision for children and young people with SEND in both special and mainstream schools, making sure they have every opportunity to thrive. Being acknowledged in this way reaffirms our mission of 'Learning together, to be the best we can be.'"