



**Standards Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday 16 July 2024 at 17:00 – 19:00**  
**via MS Teams**

<b>Those Present:</b>		
Andrew Child	Member/Chair of Board of Directors	AC
Victoria Morris	Advisor	VM
Naomi Cooper	Advisor	NC
Phil Bradley	Advisor	PB
<b>Also Present:</b>		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
Michelle Smith	HR Manager	MS
Lyndsay Foster	Governance Clerk	LF
Joanne Cliff	Executive Assurance Partner	JC
<b>Apologies:</b>		
Peter Castleton	Director/Chair	PC
Rosey Andrassy	Advisor	RA
Colin Bradley	Director	CB
Gill Askew	Director	GA
<b>No Apologies:</b>		
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
<p>1.1. To receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from RA, PC and CB</p>	
<p>1.2. To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were accepted from RA, PC and CB</p>	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business. Whilst the meeting was not quorate, the acting Chair – AC – agreed for the meeting to be held as no decisions were required.</p>	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
<p>3.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>There were no declarations of personal or business interest received.</p>	
4. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES	
<p>4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 7 May 2024 were agreed.</p>	
<p>4.2. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>The outstanding actions on the action tracker were reviewed and updated.</p> <p><b>ACTION: MS to provide a breakdown for agency/supply spend for first quarter 24/25 including overall value and % of overall budget spends.</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION: MS 21/01/25</b></p>
<p>4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
<p>5.1 CSIF Delivery Plan</p> <p>JT provided an overview of the CSIF Delivery Plan and Standards Committee report. Currently, the Trust has just over 2400 students and 1150 staff working across 15 schools and 30 different sites. Four recent Ofsted inspections at Heatherwood, Coppice, Kelford, and Pennine View have yielded very positive results. Pennine View saw its grades increase while the grades for the other three schools remained the same. All schools, except, Heatherwood, received enhanced support for Ofsted readiness which was greatly appreciated by the staff.</p> <p>Additionally, JT highlighted the growing partnerships with various institutions and organisations across the Trust. Nexus MAT has also been approached to support the</p>	

Derby Research School indicating the Trust's expanding influence and collaborative efforts.

We are currently working closely with the Maths hub and English hub and the Doncaster Research School.

The Trust is currently developing a program with Landmarks to provide supported internships for school leavers, helping them transition into employment. The first cohort of apprentice on the Waterton delivery route has been highly successful receiving outstanding ratings in all areas and a second cohort is planned.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the Trust has been balancing the rollout of the new health check system while ensuring the schools remain Ofsted ready.

**NC asked if there is more detail on the Research schools in Doncaster and Derby?**

JF stated that currently efforts are focused on the implementation guidance and developing a SEND element which will be rolled out across both mainstream and special schools. Additionally, work is underway on creating a Teaching Assistant toolkit which will be available for use by all schools to support their staff effectively.

**NC asked about the methodology of the implementation?**

JT confirmed that it has not been defined yet but two Executive Assurance Partners are currently meeting and are in the planning phases.  
NC expressed interest in seeing how this develops.

**VM asked about the pre internships; how many pupils can access this and how long will the programme run?**

JT confirmed that it will be a two-year programme and it will be open to as many pupils as possible. It will be a train the trainer model.

**AC asked regarding Maths mastery on page 4 -why is it so successful in our special schools?**

JT explained that it is due to using concrete apparatus and making sure the children understand.

The Chair applauded the work put into the documents.

JT summarised the work of the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and network groups and stated she feels the initiative has been very successful with staff working well together and appreciating the opportunity to collaborate. She mentioned plans to focus on more task-oriented, smaller groups next year to make it more manageable for schools to release staff d. These groups would align with next year's work plan. AC suggested monitoring the success and direction of these groups and NC agreed to make this an action point going forward.

**ACTION: JT to review the initiative in 6-12 months' time.**

**PB asked about the PLCs and what kind of commitment they have to these?**

JT explained that the behaviour focused group has been running for two years with

**ACTION:  
JT  
15/07/25**

strong attendance and representation from all schools at the meetings. PB agreed noting that the group is effective for sharing good practices.

**AC asked if JT is happy with the overall pupil attendance levels?**

JT stated that overall attendance has shown a trust-wide improvement, thanks in part to JC from the central team. JC has been conducting internal audits to aid in this progress. The trust is currently above the national average for special schools. Craggs, a mainstream school, is still below the national average but is showing signs of improvement.

CEO noted that Heatherwood requires further work on attendance. LS is collaborating with the headteacher to address this issue. Even after accounting for medical absences, attendance remains low and continues to need improvement.

**AC asked about the recent adoption of Edupay and how it feeds into the Single Central Record data aggregation?** CEO stated it's the opportunity to have single central record in the broader system, which could reduce duplication inputting to multiple systems. Edupay is running for a further 16 months so the Trust is actively testing the system.

**AC asked about section 4.1.4 within the overview of children in receipt of a child protection plan wishing to understand the decreasing trends.**

PB noted that early intervention and support are crucial. If the numbers for child protection cases escalate it raises red flags indicating that existing measures may not be sufficient. However, it can also be seen as a positive sign of early help being effectively utilised. On the other hand, if the numbers fall too low, it prompts a review of whether the thresholds for intervention are appropriately set.

PB also highlighted that a higher number of children in need plans is a positive indicator, reflecting that support is being provided at the necessary level for child welfare.

**AC asked if suspensions and exclusions, as mentioned on page 23, are decreasing due to staff maturity and improved pupil management?**

JT responded that while the reduction in suspensions and exclusions is influenced by staff development and intervention strategies each case is unique and independent. Significant efforts have been made across schools, including a recent five-day behaviour management research initiative at Bader, which evaluated the effectiveness of strategies and early intervention in classes. CEO added that extensive work has been done with schools and headteachers to address high suspension rates.

PB queried the impact of working with virtual schools in their expanded remit for children allocated a social worker, and if this has impacted on suspensions and exclusions, noting very positive outcomes in this change elsewhere. PB asked if Nexus schools are experiencing similar benefits. CEO responded that, while collaboration with virtual schools has generally been positive, it does not appear to be having a significant impact on Nexus schools regarding suspensions and exclusions.

**AC asked 5.2.2 about the nature of Irwin Mitchel's involvement in CPOMS reporting?**

<p>JT explained that all schools record on CPOMS, and that Irwin Mitchell recently conducted a training session providing case studies to aid understanding of how to better maintain records. JT confirmed it was well attended by DSLs and Heads and very well received. AC applauded the very thorough report and the depth of information provided. The diagrams and graphs included were particularly welcomed.</p> <p><b>PB asked how often do the DSLs meet?</b> JT informed the committee that DSLs meet once a term. PC has attended these meetings before, so committee members are very welcome to attend. JC to confirm dates. <b>ACTION: JC to confirm dates for DSL meeting.</b></p> <p>CEO thanked everyone for their feedback on the reports emphasising that the quality assurance processes are critical for Ofsted readiness. The hard work across the schools in the trust has been instrumental and the progress at Coppice and Kelford is a testament to JT and her team's support for the Heads.</p>	<p><b>ACTION: JC 21/01/25</b></p>
<p>5.2 Standards Committee Report</p> <p>Discussed under 5.1</p>	
<p>5.2.1 Behaviour Audit Report</p> <p>Document shared prior to meeting for information.</p> <p><b>AC asked about paragraph 2.1; with the half a day, is this per week or month?</b> JT explained that annual audits are conducted by Emma Bellamy, an Executive Assurance Partner, who supports and works with all schools across the trust. Any actions identified during these audits are incorporated into the school's School Improvement Plan (SIP) if they are not already addressed. CEO added that the report had undergone detailed scrutiny by the Schools Performance Scrutiny Board as part of that board's remit.</p>	
<p>5.3 Safeguarding &amp; Children in Care Report</p> <p>JC joined to discuss the report.</p> <p>JC reported a reduction in Child Protection cases within the trust, decreasing from 24 to 18. These cases may transition into the "Child in Need" category where the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will continue to provide support.</p> <p>Early help support is on the rise, with 74 children currently receiving assistance, primarily for family support and mental health issues. There have been no referrals to the "Prevent" program recently and the number of referrals for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is at zero. However, there has been an increase in referrals related to harmful sexual behaviours which will be addressed with age-appropriate education throughout the schools.</p> <p>PB expressed surprise at the low number of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) cases. CEO responded that the low number is noted and regular advice is sought</p>	

<p>regarding LADO matters. This period has been relatively quiet and any potential referrals will be discussed with the LADO as needed before proceeding.</p> <p>MS mentioned that Sheffield schools utilise an advice line to determine whether referrals are necessary. She noted that Doncaster appears to be the most consistent in this regard.</p> <p><b>AC asked about page 8: Pennine View are reporting that only four areas are secure -why has this arisen?</b></p> <p>JC shared that a new DSL has been appointed who was initially lacking confidence but is now making progress. The focus is on key areas including "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and demonstrating compliance with evidence. Additionally, there are efforts to reduce staff workload by rationalising the section 175 audit toolkit, with these changes set to be implemented in September.</p> <p><b>PB asked would we know % of students excluded from school to the ones who are subject to children in need?</b></p> <p>CEO confirmed this is data that can be provided but more analysis would be needed. PB left the meeting 18:43.</p> <p>CEO reminded the committee that Ofsted found safeguarding to be effective without question at Pennine View, so Directors can be assured that the school is compliant with statutory requirements.</p>	
<p>5.3.1 Trust Safeguarding Annual Plan</p> <p>The document was discussed and shared out prior to the meeting. JC highlighted areas from each schools' commonalities which will be reviewed termly and reported back.</p> <p>VM thanked JC for the new form and all hard work in the document.</p> <p>JC left the meeting 18:46.</p>	
<p>5.4 HR Scorecard</p> <p>MS summarised the report noting that the working days have been split as previously discussed. Stability within the workforce is fairly strong with turnover is running below the national average and sickness levels are also lower. Some schools continue to experience attendance concerns but HR staff are deployed to provide support. The turnover rate is averaging 2.93%, which is significantly lower than the national average of about 16%. A pie chart document was shared during the meeting for further clarity.</p> <p><b>CEO confirmed that the trust can provide schools data shown for the trust but is this what directors wish to see?</b></p> <p>PB replied he thought this would be useful to read.</p> <p>NC also enquired whether officers could exception reporting on any anomalies.</p> <p>PB stated that it would be good to measure where we are.</p>	

<p>CEO informed from next year the Trust will be able to share line graphs for year to date and look to provide yearly updates. MS to work with Matthew Sorby in the Trust to look at aiding and analysis.</p> <p><b>ACTION: MS to provide document discussed with schools' data and indicate highest and lowest outliers and any other anomalies.</b></p>	<p><b>ACTION: MS 21/01/25</b></p>
<p>5.5 Happiness Plan</p> <p>MS informed of typographical error there are 2 pillar threes one should be a four.</p> <p><b>ACTION: MS to amend typographical error in report on three pillars.</b></p> <p>MS stated that the report and had been done by Joanna Hedge in the Trust and it was put together as a result of the employee opinion survey.</p> <p>HR are currently looking at a revised way of managing the supply staff bank, to bring costs down further. The Trust has access to good health and wellbeing support and pensions schemes including a rewards scheme through Westfield Health. Executive Officers are looking into an electric vehicle lease scheme and already have the cycle to work scheme in place. In Pillar 3 there's some support for Menopause support with occupational health.</p> <p>Staff parliament has asked for golden ticket initiative which is being considered. This would involve nominating staff who may get a free day off work.</p> <p>Pillar 4 includes mental health first aiders in the Trust and all schools have a least one per school to support staff when needed.</p> <p>One item that has been explored is an app that will work for staff to anonymously report any concerns.</p> <p>Pillar 5 is about recruitment and HR are working on marketing the scheme to enhance people wanting to join the Trust.</p> <p>MS informed the Trust conference is on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025.</p> <p><b>AC asked how the app would stand up in court? For example, for malpractice being reported.</b></p> <p>CEO stated the intention is to enhance reporting of low-level concerns. It is not a replacement for the Whistleblowing procedure. It is more to start a dialogue with staff members and looking into any issues, trying to reassure staff they can speak out anonymously and it will be taken seriously. They may have to raise formally outside of that process.</p>	
<p>5.6 Annual Safeguarding Statement of Assurance</p> <p>CEO informed this document is going to Board tomorrow as not quorum, PC to discuss at the board, no amendments to suggest.</p>	
<p>5.7 Risk Register</p> <p>Reported for information. No changes requested.</p>	
<p>5.8 Minutes of the Spring Term Schools' Performance &amp; Scrutiny Board.</p>	

Report for information.	
<b>6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair  CEO confirmed it was the last meeting to be attended by AC, and thanked him for his contribution to the work of committee.	
<b>7. CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting  None raised.	
7.2. To consider any areas of risk discussed in the meeting  None.	
<b>8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS</b>	

Tuesday 21 January 2025	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 13 May 2025	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 15 July 2025	5 – 7pm	MS Teams

**Minutes approved by Trust Board of Directors**

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE