



**Nexus MAT Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday 27 November 2024  
5.00 pm – 7.30 pm via MS Teams**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Role:</b>	<b>Initials:</b>
Rachel Potts	Director/Member & Chair of Trust Board of Directors	Chair
Sue Shelley	Director & Vice Chair of Trust Board of Directors	SS
Colin Bradley	Director	CB
Phil Bradley	Director	PB
Naomi Cooper	Director	NC
Mark Greenwood	Director	MG
Ray Palmer	Director	RPa
<b>Also Present:</b>		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Joel Hardwick	Assistant CEO – Corporate Affairs	JH
Renata Robins	Governance Clerk	Clerk
Karen Smith	Chief Finance Officer	CFO
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
<b>Apologies:</b>		
Gillian Askew	Director	GA
Tina Havenhand	Director	TH
Victoria Morris	Director	VM
<b>No Apologies:</b>		

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	ACTIONS
1.1 Welcome & receive apologies for absence  Apologies were received for GA, TH and VM.	
1.2 To accept apologies for absence  Apologies were accepted for GA, TH and VM.	
2. ITEMS FOR AOB	
Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered  CEO informed the Directors that Rosie Andrassy had stepped down in her capacity as Advisor due to work commitments.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	
3.1 Individual Directors to declare any personal, business/governance interests on any item on the agenda  None declared.	
4. NEXUS MAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES	
4.1 To approve the minutes of the following meeting:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust Board Meeting held on Wednesday 23 October 2024.</li> </ul> The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.	
4.2 Review of Action Tracker:  19.1 The CEO confirmed that a pre-meeting with refreshments was scheduled for 18 December at 16:00, providing an opportunity for Directors to acknowledge Naveen Judah's tenure. Both Steve Booth and Peter Castleton had accepted the invitation to attend.  Action Tracker was reviewed and updated as appropriate.	
4.3 Matters arising from the Minutes  SS requested an update on the Big Build project at Hilltop. JH reported that demolition of the bungalows had commenced and assured the Directors that a further update would be provided at the December meeting.  <b>Action:</b> Update on progress of works on the Big Build project at Hilltop.  No further matters were raised.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Action:</u></b> JH 18.12.2024</p>

<p><b>5. BENTS GREEN SCHOOL – SPPLEMENTARY BUDGET INFORMATION – TO TAKE A DECISION</b></p>	
<p>The CEO acknowledged and thanked the CFO for preparing the supplementary budget information, then presented the key points to the Directors. Back in the summer when full due diligence was reporting, the Directors were aware of their responsibilities and noted concerns about the Bents Green budget. Consequently, they agreed in principle to the decision for Bents Green to academise, subject to further assurance work on the budget. This report summarises that further assurance work.</p> <p>Following a thorough discussion on the budget information presented, during which Directors raised several questions, the <b>Directors unanimously voted (by a show of hands) to proceed with the conversion of Bents Green.</b></p>	
<p><b>6. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM</b></p>	
<p>Minuted separately as Confidential Appendix 1.</p>	
<p><b>7. POLICY REVIEW REPORT - TO TAKE A DECISION</b></p>	
<p>The CEO recommended that Directors accept the changes made to Trust policies as outlined in Section 3 of the report. In particular, the Code of Conduct update to reflect the new law on flexible working.</p> <p><b>Directors voted unanimously to accept the changes made to the Trust policies as outlined in Section 3 of the report.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> JH to issue a policy briefing to inform the workforce on the policy updates.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> <b>JH</b> <b>28.11.2024</b></p>
<p>7.1. Academies Policy Review Board Action Log 14.11.24 - to receive for information</p> <p>Received for information.</p>	
<p><b>8. INDEPENDENT SCHOOL – SHEFFIELD - TO TAKE A DECISION</b></p>	
<p>The CEO and JH introduced the report, provided an update and invited questions.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked what age group the provision for complex children was aimed at?</b> JH responded that he thought the initial cohort would be aimed at secondary-schoolage children.</p> <p><b>The Chair noted that Sheffield appeared highly supportive of an independent school as the solution. Reflecting on past discussions, such as with Barnsley, where JH had highlighted opportunities for growth, she asked whether future plans might involve Barnsley or remain focused solely on Sheffield?</b> JH stated that there were two key aspects to consider. First, regarding the site itself, there were additional spaces that could be utilised for various cohorts. This would likely involve discussions with Sheffield about their broader sufficiency needs, including a potential short-term commission for alternative provision for students at risk of exclusion. Sheffield officers had immediate commissioning needs, as well as those</p>	

projected over the next 2–3 years, and Nexus had already engaged in promising discussions about these requirements.

Second, the wider opportunities lay in the model itself. Barnsley and Doncaster council officers had shown strong interest in adopting that approach to address their own sufficiency challenges, which they now recognised as a priority.

**The Chair emphasised the importance of clear and careful communication, particularly regarding public perception of Nexus operating an independent school.**

JH clarified that Nexus intended to position the school as an academy, aligning it with other academy schools, and branding it as a commissioned partnership with the local authority.

**CB enquired about the development of a partnership proposal, asking for clarification on the nature of the partnership. Would it be purely commissioning, or was there a difference?**

JH clarified that the contractual relationship between Nexus and Sheffield council would be on an individual placement basis, similar to those for independent special schools. A higher-level partnership agreement was proposed, outlining shared principles for collaboration. This agreement clarified that Nexus was taking on the site in partnership with Sheffield council to address high-needs and sufficiency challenges. Ultimately, the arrangement focused on individual placement commissions.

**CB understood that from Sheffield’s perspective, they would aim to develop the market in a way that ensured they would work with the right partners.**

JH agreed, noting that Sheffield council officers were highly aware of the risks posed by hedge-fund-backed independent special school operators and were taking steps to mitigate them.

**CB asked whether the intention was that this would be run through the trading subsidiary?**

JH confirmed this would be likely be the case, though a final decision had not yet been made.

**NC enquired if there was any knowledge about the staffing requirements for the school yet, due to the high needs of the children?**

JH clarified that the outline plan would help calculate place costs, including rent, and that it incorporated a staffing structure developed with Lisa Suter, Executive Regional Director (formerly Executive Head), who has experience supporting complex students at Heatherwood and North Ridge. While the plan outlined staffing levels, it was unlikely that specific staff would transfer unless they applied during the recruitment process.

**The Chair enquired about the headteacher appointment, in terms of process and time scale, at what point did officers think they would be looking to appoint a headteacher?**

JH stated that, that appointment was currently out for advert. Strong interest has been shown and the hope would be to recruit before the end of January, to give officers the ability to get that person in post.

<p><b>Directors noted the update on the project and voted unanimously (by a show of hands) to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>support the key next steps around the in-principle agreement with Sheffield City Council and the lease</b></li> <li>• <b>officers to revisit this item in December or January with lease specifics following landlord discussions, as Director approval would be required before signing off on the lease.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Independent School – Sheffield, presentation of lease specifics following landlord discussions.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> JH Dec 2024 / January 2025</p>
<p><b>9. APPOINTMENT OF ACADEMY COUNCIL CHAIR AT NORTH RIDGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL – TO TAKE A DECISION</b></p>	
<p>The CEO recommended the Directors approve the appointment of Rebecca Allard as Academy Council Chair of North Ridge Community School. RA was more than happy to take up this appointment.</p> <p><b>Directors unanimously approved the appointment of Rebecca Allard as Academy Council Chair of North Ridge Community School from 1 January 2025.</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services to facilitate the necessary amendments and GIAS updates.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Clerking Services 28.11.2024</p>
<p><b>10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p>None raised.</p>	
<p><b>11. REVIEW OF RISK</b></p>	
<p>To consider any new risks identified during the meeting for referral to Trust Committees</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p><b>12. CONFIDENTIALITY</b></p>	
<p>To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting</p> <p>12.1. Item 6 minuted separately as Confidential Appendix 1.</p>	

Wednesday 11 December 2024	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 18 December 2024	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Monday 13 January 2025	17:30-19:00	Annual General Meeting - Nexus HQ/Teams
Wednesday 29 January 2025	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 26 February 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 26 March 2025	17:00-19:30	Teams

Wednesday 30 April 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 21 May 2025	17:00-19:30	Teams
Wednesday 25 June 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ
Wednesday 23 July 2025	17:00-19:30	Nexus HQ

**Minutes approved.**

<b>CHAIR</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DATE</b>