

**MINUTES OF THE GENESIS EDUCATION TRUST BOARD MEETING
HELD ON 21 MARCH 2023
AT 6PM
BY VIRTUAL ZOOM**

Present: Mr. Graham Moss (Chair)
Canon Ade Ademola
Ms. Beverley Hall (CEO)
Mr. Hilton Idahos
Ms. Alisha Anderson
Ms. Fredericka Bines

Also in Attendance: Mrs. Elaine James

Clerk for the Meeting: Pauline Dorney

1. PRAYER, WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Canon Ade Ademola commenced the Meeting with a Prayer.

1.1 Apologies for Absence were received and accepted from Ms. Deborah Haworth-Hampshire and Ms. Susannah Quinsee.

1.2 There were no Apologies for Absence not accepted.

1.3 The Meeting was quorate.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 There were no Declarations of Interest noted.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

3.1 Leadership Report to be discussed.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND VACANCIES ON THE TRUST BOARD

4.1 Ms. Fredericka Bines joined the Trust Board and provided a brief summary of her background to Trustees

It was unanimously agreed to appoint Ms. Fredericka Bines to the Trust Board.

5. CHAIR'S ACTION

5.1 The Chair wished to record, on behalf of the Trust Board, their condolences to Mrs. Beverley Hall on the passing of her Mother recently.

5.2 The Chair liaised with the CEO relating to the two Reports received and the contents were discussed and how it fitted in with the ethos of the Genesis Trust.

5.3 The Chair and Mr. Amir Lemouchi attended the Waltham Forest Schools' Conference at the Regent Hotel, Chigwell, Essex. This was a very interesting visit. The Local Authority wished to add value and put forward a number of proposals on how this could be accomplished.

6. MINUTES

6.1 The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13 December 2022 were agreed as a true record of that Meeting and would be signed by the Chair accordingly.

6.2 Matters arising:
6.2.1 Nothing to report.

7.1 FINANCE

7.1 Some amendments to the Finance Minutes were requested as follows:-

Item 4.3.2:-

With regard to the difficulties at St. Margaret's the Diocese had agreed to cover the building repairs and recoup any cost if possible from the Building Company, however the Headteacher, at that time, did not sign an official contract with the Builder therefore the Trust did not have a guarantee and there was no possibility of getting the cost of the building work recouped from the Building Company.

Item 4.1.3:-

These increases were mainly due to the cost of Flooding increases and St. Mary's is larger than the other two schools in reference to the variances.

First question in Item 4.2.1:-

Name should read James not Janes. Enhancement should read Resilience.

7.2 Matters arising:

We have been more than successful in trying to obtain funding for the Trust which is due to Elaine James and her Team. We are still awaiting the outcome of the CIF bids to date. Once news on outstanding CIF Bids are received this would be emailed to all Board members.

ACTION: Elaine James

There were no major concerns relating to the Budget figures.

Flood 1 would be hopefully closing down in Easter and the remainder is ongoing.

Ms. Elaine James and the CEO clarified the Floods' situation in respect of new Trustee, Fredericka attending the Meeting.

There were no major concerns relating to the Budgets.

The Internal Audit Report had been sent to all Governors and there were no comments emailed to Ms. Elaine James.

It is hoped that the Government may issue Guidelines on the Early Years Funding before the next Finance Committee Meeting.

The Finance Report had been noted by the Trust Board.

8. STANDARDS

8.1 Minutes of Standards Meeting 20 February 2023 to be reviewed

8.1.1 The CEO reported that they had met recently. The following points were highlighted:-

--

8.1.2 This was a positive Meeting with detailed feedback on the Section 48. The majority of the meeting was taken going through Section 48 and an update was provided on where St. Margaret's was with regard to Ofsted. The Framework changes next year when grades would not be graded they would show pointers for development if necessary.

A significant part of the Meeting was where Sophie addressed Governors on how St. Margaret's was Ofsted ready in the Autumn Term. The Inspection would probably be a Section 8. The key areas of development at St. Margaret's are Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering, etc.

This was a very productive meeting. The Risk Register was discussed and the areas that were updated.

St. Mary's would also be preparing for Section 48 for the Autumn Term. St. Saviour's is now graded 'outstanding' and is less likely to be inspected.

General discussion took place amongst the Board relating to the recent publicity regarding Ofsted Inspections.

9.
9.1

REPORTS

Report 1:

The Chair referred to previous discussions about "How do you make a Trust Sustainable?"

You can have good Finance but that does not provide sustainability – it is Leadership. Movement of Resources has been going out of London to other parts of the country – it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract new talent into schools. You end up with the scenario of a difference in salaries from area to area. The candidates that have had Leadership responsibilities in other schools actually show that they are not as experienced as personnel that are currently employed within the Trust.

This was clarified further by Mr. Graham Moss to the Board members. It was suggested that the Trust should be developing their own personnel for sustainability. The first Report covers the outcome of Leadership that has been good and the second Report related to; given the level of Leadership that the Trust needs that they should be developing personnel to a higher level as well. It was stated that if the Trust were challenged to assist other Schools there would be a need for experienced personnel to help take this task forward without diluting the strength of the senior management within the Trust.

9.2 The CEO stated that over a number of years the Trust had been developing staff through Schools' Direct to become teachers and then Middle Leadership and most recently the Accelerated Leadership programme. This has encouraged the Trust to ringfence this initiative and strongly encourage the development of people to undertake the Accelerated Leadership Programme process.

The Trust had been very successful and coming to the end of their third year during these initiatives. The aim is for them to move forward and take up Assistant Headteacher Roles which has come to fruition.

--

It is intended to retain these personnel and their skills for a longer period. It was therefore suggested to introduce an Apprenticeship in an Assistant Headteacher Role – a trainee process. This had been budgeted for and the potential 3.5% Pay Award that the Government had spoken about for teachers. This would be considered as a natural progression and next step. This was clarified in detail to Trust Board Members. Training impacts very strongly on people's ability to lead.

9.3

Proposal 1:

It was proposed to have some Trainee Assistant Headteachers and this would be particularly useful for next year; because of the significant floods that we have had and the particular ongoing resilience works and meetings to fix the Floods. This would provide an opportunity to have increased capacity together with the ongoing support that the Trust provides to other Schools or secondments to the Nursery – it would be a good idea to introduce this initiative which has been included within the Budget. This would be run for one year as an extension to the Arts Programme after which it would be reviewed to see the impact.

Question:

Do you have any staff in mind for the roles that you mention?

Answer:

No conversations have been entered into. However, it would be an internal application and candidates would have to apply – it would not be an automatic progression. This would be ringfenced for one year and would not be advertised externally. A criteria would be set.

Question:

What is the difference between a Headteacher and an Associate Headteacher and was a job share for the Headteacher role considered and does the Associate Headteacher Role work across one school or all three. Is it technically the same grade as the Headteacher Role?

Answer:

Yes – the Associate Headteacher would work across all three schools or they may focus particularly on one. At St. Margaret's our current Headteacher will be going on Maternity Leave and the Deputy would be acting Headteacher. The Associate Headteacher, in September, would provide support at St. Margaret's especially in view of a forthcoming Ofsted Inspection. That Role would work across all three Schools. The difference in Pay Grade is the same; they are all Headteachers – whether an Associate Headteacher or a Headteacher the Pay Grade and expectation is the same as well. The expectation is that should there be a vacancy in one of the Schools the Association Headteacher would slot into that role. Because this would be a temporary Variation it is quite difficult to look at a job share and there would not be anyone that would act up in that position at a senior level for a long term position. It was thought that the easier way would be that the Associate Role would fit neatly into a three/four day week which would be a temporary adjustment of the work. Whereas the job share as a Headteacher would need to be carefully looked into and very complicated. Leadership would be about ultimate responsibility.

--

The background of the Report states that the Associate Headteacher had requested flexible working for child care needs which would fit very much into the Associate Headteacher Role much easier than managing a very large three form entry School that is due a Section 48 and the interim Headteacher who is currently the Deputy Headteacher would continue which would be reviewed next year particularly as the interim Headteacher at the moment (who is currently the Deputy Headteacher) would be relocating outside of London so there was not the opportunity to consider this as a Job Share. Also it did highlight the fact that we do have a young team – we currently have one teacher on Maternity Leave and another Headteacher going on Maternity Leave. The young Leadership Team are currently having babies. The Trust needs to ensure that they have very strong personnel to back up these absences.

It was considered a very good suggestion for an additional Trainee Assistant Headteacher Role may be an interesting Proposal.

Overview by Mr. Graham Moss:

Given the change of the nature of the workforce in London and the greater reliance on young woman to take on Leadership Roles; as a Trust we must do all we can to support. What is happening in London recently is a lot of young female teachers who had been on maternity leave and returning to their roles have wanted to use the legislation more, in terms of asking for, working on a flexible basis and as an employer we have to consider that and have a very good reason why we could not support this arrangement. The issue to be considered is that if you do not agree to a flexible working arrangement and have to fill the post externally; the quality and experience of the candidates may not be as good and therefore it suits the Trust and the Pupils to be flexible to support outstanding teachers and Leadership to retain within the Genesis Trust.

It is assumed that the Trustees of the Board would support the CEO and the Chair in taking the decision on how best the Trust uses their workforce.

Question to Elaine James:

From a purely financial point of view - how are you able to build into the Budget the flexibility that enables us to take these issues on board?

Answer:

There has been a great deal of time spent on Budgets and ensuring that this would be sustainable going forward. As explained before, we generate a great deal of income and this enables us to do all these wonderful things. The Trust has been very lucky where young members of staff are taking and returning from their maternity leave at the same time which works very well. However, the increases in Pay Awards and Pensions are becoming challenging.

First Proposal:

The fact that the existing Head of School at St. Mary's – when she returns from Maternity Leave would take on the role as Associate Headteacher for four days per week.

The existing interim Head at St. Mary's would continue in that role.

--

At St. Margaret's when the existing Head goes on Maternity Leave the existing Deputy Headteacher takes on the interim role as Head of School but would be supported by the Leadership Team and the Associate Headteacher.

The Trust unanimously agreed to the above Proposal.

9.4 Second Proposal:
Report 2 - on Training Extension:-

The Trust are looking at introducing a Training EHT Programme. The Trust would advertise internally to look at the response and based on the criteria candidates would be selected which had been fully costed. This would initially be for up to four candidates which would be reviewed from time to time. The post would be open to those already in the 2nd year of the ALP programme and would be designed to enhance the leadership skills they had gained.

This would be beneficial to the Trust to allow for additional capacity within the leadership team and for the retention of skilled senior staff.

The Trust have a Policy on Pay and as a Board this Variation Agreement was unanimously ratified.

9.5 Deputy for Elaine James

Mr. Graham Moss addressed the Board by stating that Ms. Elaine James, at some point, would be retiring and a request was made for a candidate to deputise for her. It would be necessary to train a person to take on her role.

The job becomes more and more challenging and was considered important to mentor a suitable candidate. This role would not only undertake finances they would be overall in charge of statutory obligations and ensure that these would remain in place. Pensions would have to be up to date as the Trust are employers and would be held responsible for these tasks.

For the Trust, it was considered very important to appoint a very strong candidate. Ms. Elaine James would support this candidate as much as possible in order to continue the great work of the Trust.

It would be advisable to advertise this Post externally and funding would be Available within the Budget allocation. The salary for a Deputy Level would be approximately £48,000 to £52,000 to start; with the qualifications required.

General discussion took place and it was agreed that a suitable Plan would need to be created. The Job Description would need to be very clear and concise and cover everything; which would be very difficult.

Question:

Would the candidate have to have a School background?

Answer:

Preferably – this was clarified by Elaine James, Graham Moss and the CEO.

--

The suitable candidate would be trained up accordingly.

The Trust unanimously agreed to the above Proposal of appointing a Deputy for Elaine James on the salary range quoted above for September 2023.

10. POLICIES

10.1 The following Policies were brought to the Trust Board Meeting for ratification:-

10.2 Health and Safety Policy

10.2.1 **The Trust Board ratified this Policy**

10.3 ICT and Online Safety

10.3.1 **The Trust Board ratified this Policy**

10.4 Visitors' Code of Conduct

10.4.1 **The Trust Board ratified this Policy**

10.5 Home School Agreement

10.5. **The Trust Board ratified this Policy**

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Fredericka Bines decided to join the Finance Committee.

11.2 Mr. Graham Moss decided to join the Standards Committee and cancelled his membership on the Finance Committee.

11.3 The CEO provided a brief summary of the recent visit to St. Mary's by the Director of Education. Ms. Lauren Long visited the School and spoke with staff and noted the passion and energy level from the School. She was very impressed and pleased with everything the School was offering and was very keen for all Schools to engage.

The Trust were more interested in making this a much wider engagement picture which was spoken about.

Lauren Long was very positive with the School and the Meeting was very successful. This visit had been followed up with emails, a few offers of things that the Trust were happy for her to share with other Schools, particularly the work carried out on 'School of Sanctuary'.

Mr. Graham Moss advised the Board that he had a discussion with Ms. Lauren Long and asked "how well do you know your Schools?" Visits from Advisors three times per year and the nature of the Reports that they write; appear to be challenging. Some Heads often know they have weaknesses but feel that if they mention them they could be looked down upon by the Local Authority. Unless there is mutuality which you get in a Trust relating to Leadership you are not going to raise standards in Waltham Forest.

The CEO advised the Board that she had discussions regarding accountability. Waltham Forest is 1% above the National Average which is very low and the CEO spoke about the 45% of pupils not achieving which is not a good level of accountability. It was mentioned that the three Schools within the Trust were very successful because everyone works together.

This was clarified in detail by the CEO to the Trust Board.

--

12. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING
15.1 Get Trust Board Meeting 18 July 2023 6pm (ZOOM)

The Meeting closed at 7.45pm with a Closing Prayer.

Thanks were conveyed to everyone for attending the Meeting.

Chair: (print)

..... (sign)

Date:

GET Trust Board Meeting
Draft Minutes
21-03-2023

Chair's Initials:
