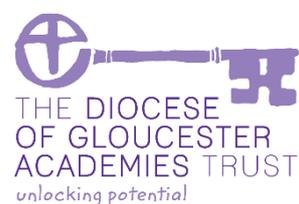


Chair of Governors' Forum
Meeting notes – 1st March 2022



	<p>In attendance Bibury – Anthony Godwin Clearwater – Jo Grills Coaley – Dursley – Neil Grecian Field Court Infant – Carl Curtis Hardwicke – Sarah Nicholson Lakefield – Keith Withers Longney – Diane Bainbridge Minchinhampton – Stephen Draper North Cerney – Piers Ormerod Primrose Hill – Sara Sleeman St John’s – St James – Kelley Sutton St Matthews’ – Ali Spencer St Lawrence – Susan Holmes Whiteshill – Bill Mesley Winchcombe – Anna Hay</p> <p>Central Team - Rachel Howie (RH), Nicki Wadley (NW), Rob Jones (RJ) Trust Board – Tim Brock -Trust Board Vice Chair</p>
1	<p>Opening prayer, introduction and apologies</p> <p>RH welcomed all present. RH thanked all for their commitment to governance and their schools and particularly to those governors who were attending to represent their Chair.</p> <p>Apologies were noted and accepted from Dr Katie Blaney, who is being represented by Bill Measley and also from Katherine Clamp.</p> <p>RH explained that Anthony Griffiths has stood down as Chair of St John’s Church of England Primary Academy with immediate effect, which had always been Tony’s attention post the school’s Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>RH opened the meeting in prayer.</p>
2	<p>Actions from last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RH to write to all staff to explain Teacher Pay Award and issue relating to support staff pay – completed - NW to send individual clerking information to each Chair – NW apologised for not having sent this information out. Please contact Nicki directly if you would still like to receive it.
3	<p>Update on recent Ofsted inspections – Jo Grills.</p> <p>RH explained that two schools within the Trust had been inspected by Ofsted in recent weeks. It was the first ever inspection for Clearwater CoFE Primary academy and the first inspection for St John’s CoFE Primary Academy since joining DGAT.</p> <p>JG shared the recent Ofsted inspection experience from Clearwater CoE Primary Academy. JG shared she could not share the provisional judgment as the report had not yet been published.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inspection was conducted by a lead HMI with a second inspector attending on the first day for training purposes – this inspector did not participate in the inspection. ▪ The school took a proactive approach during the inspection ‘what else can we show you...’. ▪ JG and her Vice Chair had prepared an Ofsted file which included up-to-date HT reports, the school’s Self Evaluation Framework and key data and information. JG shared that they didn’t need the file during the inspection, but it gave a sense of security knowing it was there. ▪ Governors had made sure they were aware of the new Ofsted Inspection framework prior to inspection. ▪ Governors were invited to meet with the inspector towards the end of the inspection once all key lines of enquiry had been explored. ▪ JG recommended that governors meeting with the inspector had regular conversations with the HT during the inspection in order to understand key lines of enquiry and to follow the progress of the inspection. ▪ The inspector had read all governor notes of visit ahead of the inspection as well as governor minutes and gained a lot of information from these related to the key lines of enquiry. The meant that he did not need to follow these areas up with governors. ▪ JG shared that the inspection was thorough but felt fair and the inspector was personable. ▪ The inspector was open to sharing the team’s findings with governors from the inspection so far and allowed governors to contribute to the areas being explored. ▪ Governors were able to share with the inspector the school’s successes and challenges and focus on the school’s context when doing this. ▪ All governors were invited to attend the final feedback meeting and the Clerk attended to take notes – JG shared that this is important because the inspection report is light on detail, so the detail shared during final feedback is key. ▪ JG shared that the school and governors felt supported by DGAT. Helen Springett attended both days and supported the school by finding and managing the flow of information for the inspector and keeping track of key lines of enquiry and supporting staff meeting with the inspector – this gave the Headteacher the time and space to focus on the inspection. RH attended on the second day and ensured the inspection process met the inspection handbook guidance and both she and HS attended the final feedback meeting. ▪ Covid – the inspector asked about attendance of key worker and vulnerable children during lockdown and spoke to school leaders about the provision of education throughout the lockdown. <p>TB thanked JG and the whole Clearwater staff team on behalf of the Trust.</p> <p>Action: RH to share the final inspection report for Clearwater CoE Primary Academy and St John’s CoE Primary Academy when they are published.</p>
4	<p>Rob Jones, Head of Business and Operations: Update from Business and Operations team</p> <p>RJ started by sharing an update on his role and responsibilities and explained the role of Claire Morgan (CM) who has recently joined his team. RJ explained that CM’s role was introduced to bring capacity to delivering the Trust Board’s strategic priorities. RJ shared the Trust’s key strategic priorities related to his workstreams as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ICT strategy: ICT is identified as an area of propriety on the Trust’s risk register. ICT growth across the Trust has been organic and the IT structure hasn’t grown or unified in line with the growth of the Trust. There are many isolated IT environments which impacts efficiencies. following the internal scrutiny process this year, the Trust has commissioned on-site IT audits for all schools and the central team. This will lead to a roadmap for improvement and strategy documents outline the strategic improvement plan by the end of the academic year. A governor asked

	<p>if information security would be considered and include in the Trust's IT strategy. RJ confirmed it would be a key area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development strategy for Trust carbon reduction and energy management: The Trust Board have commissioned a Trust-wide energy audit and purchased an energy dashboard for all schools which will be live by the end of the Summer. Dates for the audit have been agreed with schools. The dashboard will provide schools with clearer, time-sensitive energy information which will enable greater, more effective local management and some quick wins to be achieved. Schools will be able to benchmark data seasonally, with other schools and year to year. This information will feed into the Trust carbon reduction strategy and the development of a roadmap for action. RJ will look to grant applications and will use the audit and dashboard information to support this. RJ and RH shared that the Trust Board is committed to reducing the Trust's carbon footprint and the Diocese of Gloucester's aim for carbon zero schools, and the Local Authorities carbon reduction key performance indicators. ▪ Procurement: RJ explained a key workstream for CM is exploring group procurement opportunities and whole group buy-ins. CM has analysed spend across the Trust and is re-negotiating discounted rates with existing suppliers. This will be shared with schools who can choose to opt in or out. The aim is to deliver best value for money so schools can direct resources to maximizing opportunities for pupils. RJ will list all the group procurement opportunities with Headteachers at the next Headteacher meeting. RJ will share the deals available, current savings and potential savings so Headteachers can make informed decisions. RH asked Chairs to be advocates for the benefits and opportunities this will bring schools.
5	<p>DGAT Trust Board update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education White Paper: RH explained that we are anticipating an Education White Paper to be published imminently which we expect to set out a roadmap for an academised education system. We do not know the details of this and will update Chairs once the White Paper is published. - Schools joining DGAT: RH shared that it is highly likely that Christ Church Primary School will convert from a Single Academy Trust and join DGAT on 1st June and also that Watermoor Church of England Primary School will join DGAT as a sponsored school on 1st July. RH further explained that two secondary schools has expressed an interest in joining the Trust and it is highly likely that one of these will join in early 2023. The central team is undertaking a piece of work to understand what the Trust needs to do to welcome secondary schools into the DGAT family and that this will inform the Trust Board's decision making and 5-year growth strategy. A Chair asked about the Trust Board's decision considers existing schools within the Trust as part of its growth strategy. RH explained that the Trust Board is robust in its decision making and focusses on research and identification of risk and opportunity. The Trust Board is committed to keeping children at the center of decision-making and will not damage what we already have. - Phonics: Headteachers and the school improvement team have been focussing on phonics this academic year and this is a key Trust priority following the pandemic. At the end of year 2 86% of pupils across the Trust reached the expected standard for phonics. This is lower than the Trust would usually expect but is a result of the interruptions on learning because of Covid . RH explained there was a variation of between 76% and 100% between our schools – a key question for governors is asking where your school lies in this range and explore the response and what is being implemented to improve. RH shared the caveat that the three schools which reported 100% were the three smallest schools within the Trust.
6	<p>DGAT Trust Board and LGBs – relationships and information sharing</p> <p>Information sharing processes: RH reminded Chairs that at the last meeting she asked for ideas of how LGBs could share information on the effectiveness of local governance and important points of interest with the Trust Board. The Chairs noted that it would be</p>

	<p>helpful to have clarification as to what the Trust Board wanted from LGBs. NW shared that the Trust Board discussed this at the last Trust Board meeting and have decided that the risk register will be used to initiate conversations with representatives from LGBs – this could focus on areas of best practice, new ideas/initiatives, or concerns. The Trust Board will invite representatives from LGBs to attend a committee meeting, or if appropriate the Trust Board meeting. This will develop a purposeful communication channel between Trustees and LGBs based on the Trust’s strategic priorities within the context of individual schools.</p> <p>Save the Date: Thursday February 17th: Rescheduled, more information to follow. NW explained that this event has been rescheduled for two reasons, firstly the spike in Covid cases in schools and secondly to enable the two new schools joining the Trust to be involved. The event will now be held on Tuesday 7th June – more details to follow. The event will be for Chairs of Governors -please save the date.</p>
7	<p>Policy update</p> <p>NW shared that distributing updated policies through the Howie Herald and then via Clerks seems to be working well.</p> <p>NW reminded Chairs to ensure that when speaking to HR regarding policies that the DGAT policy is used, and not the GCC model policy. In some instances, we have provided more clarity in the DGAT policies, and it is important that the school is working consistently to the correct policy.</p> <p>NW also reminded Chairs that policies provide a useful, equitable framework for both the school, Trust and employees and their implementation should be viewed as a positive action. Central team support is available to schools and governing boards when a policy is required to be implemented.</p>
8	<p>DGAT Central team update</p> <p>Steve Green now works 4 days a week and does not work a Friday.</p> <p>There is a new Headteacher at Dursley CoE Primary – Toni Holford-Wright. Toni is following a week-to-week induction and is warmly welcomed to the Trust.</p>
9	<p>Chair of governors’ Forum 2020/21</p> <p>26 April 2022 - Zoom</p> <p>7 June 2022 – in person</p>
10	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no AOB submitted ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>Keith Withers raised the issue of secondary school places and a lack of provision, RH and KW to discuss outside of the meeting. RH confirmed she has raised this with the local authority on numerous occasions.</p>