

**SOUTHFIELDS MULTI-ACADEMY TRUSTEE BOARD  
Wednesday, 5 December 2018 at 6.00pm**

**Present:**

Liz Buckley, Trustee  
George Dryja Trustee  
Wanda Golinska, Trustee (Secondary Head)  
Susan Hayday, Trustee (Chair)  
John Moore, Trustee  
Deborah Rix, Trustee (Special Head)  
Victoria Simpson, Trustee  
Sian Tyler, Trustee  
Jacqueline Valin, Trustee (MAT CEO)

**In Attendance:**

Mel Brown, Clerk (minutes)  
Stephen Elson, Director of Finance

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no apologies as all Trustees were present.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Trustees were asked to declare any personal or pecuniary interests relating to the agenda items for this meeting. None were declared.

**3. Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of previous Board Meetings**

Southfields Academy

The minutes of the last Southfields Academy Trustee meeting held on 27 June 2018 was received.

Linden Lodge

The minutes of the last Linden Lodge Governing Body meeting had been distributed by email prior to the meeting.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising from either of the above meetings.

## **MAT Business**

### **5. Chair's Report**

SH gave an overview on all Chair's activity and action which had taken place to date. Trustees noted:

- 11 October – grievance received against CEO from a member of staff which was investigated and not upheld. The matter had since been resolved.
- 17 October - made an introduction visit to LL was shown around by DR and met staff and students
- Contacted by DfE during the half term regarding an anonymous allegation that the process for establishing student's eligibility for bursaries were weak, and that as a result, students were making false claims. Investigation took place over 3 days and the allegations were without foundation. Recommendations on improving the process had been made by the DfE which are being reviewed.
- 15 November - Chaired a permanent exclusion panel. Pupil not excluded but transferred to Excel Centre and has now joined another school nearer home. As part of the panel some aspects of exclusion process have been reviewed
- 22 November JV, SH and SE met with the Regional Office to review the MAT – and discussed the education performance and strategies. Governance, finances and future plans were noted to be positive. Work going forward was noted as:
  - Continue to work on governance and structures
  - Continue to strengthen student numbers, particularly in Year 7 to ensure financial stability
- 28 November – with MH and JM undertook the annual performance review of the CEO and Headteachers, and reviewed the outcomes of the SLT performance reviews
- 30 November – SE forwarded Trustees the DfE advice on understanding data, SH had discussed with SE and suggested setting up a small group to provide guidance on data, format and reporting to the schools. A discussion was had concerning the length of reports and accompanying data. JV advised that all data was needed so that Trustees had a full picture. Following discussions Trustees asked that reports were streamlined and that an A4 summary of achievements and challenges accompanied future Headteachers Report. Further discussions were had about a dashboard or high-level matrix. DR advised she had a proforma which could be used. DR and WG agreed to meet to review the dashboard and to circulate it to Trustees for comments before the end of January.

**Action: Deborah Rix and Wanda Golinska to review and revise the performance dashboard and circulate it to Trustees by the beginning of January 2019**

**Action: Trustees to comment on dashboard by end of January 2019**

**Action: Future Headteacher's reports to be streamlined and contain a summary sheet outlining key information, exceptions and challenges**

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the verbal report.

## **6. CEO Report**

JV presented the previously circulated report and gave a comprehensive overview of the partnership with Linden Lodge and the steps towards becoming a MAT.

Trustees noted that the partnership had been driven by the following:

- Shared values and ethos of both schools to provide the best possible inclusive education and life chances for all students
- The locality of the schools which meant that realistic and effective sharing and working together could occur at all levels
- The desire of both schools to co-operate but also to retain unique identities and features
- An awareness of the reality that it was likely all schools would be required to join a MAT mostly because of financial challenges

Since 2015 Southfields has supported Linden Lodge on its journey from Ofsted 'Requiring Improvement' to a 'Good' outcome in both the main school and residential provision. Since September visits to Linden Lodge has continued to ensure successful and efficient working practices continued to be embedded.

JV gave an outline of the new governance structure and gave an overview of the Local Governing Body meetings for each school. The first round of meetings had taken place and JV had attended all meetings to ensure a good understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed.

An outline of the challenges facing both schools over the next year was noted as:

- Review of the curriculum to all pupils are able to make progress and that it meets individual needs
- Balancing of budgets and changes to High Needs Funding
- Safeguarding and Mental Health issues
- Health and therapists at Linden Lodge School
- Robust governance arrangements for the MAT and ensuring Trustees have the skills to ensure its success

The aim is to deliver the best possible outcome for all students to enable them to maximise their achievements academically, socially and emotionally, ready to take their place in society as positive and successful adults.

Trustees spoke about the need to ensure staff mental health was monitored and maintained and asked that steps were taken to investigate what support could be provided in this regard. JV gave an overview on what is in place at Southfields which included a reduction in staff hours (where requested) and a willingness to allocate

training days for this propose. DR explained that Linden Lodge had a strategy which is supported by staff health and well-being questionnaires and staff 'insight days'. DR agreed to share this with Southfields.

**Action: Deborah Rix to share staff mental health strategy with Southfields Academy**

Trustees asked for clarification of the changes/improvements made as a result of becoming a MAT and were advised that most change had been made in staff career progression pathways, finance, key staff appointments, and other back office functions.

JV was thanked for her assistance in securing more therapists at Linden Lodge.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the report.

**7. Articles of Association**

Members at the MAT AGM meeting on 26 September 2018 had proposed that the Articles were revised to greater reflect the role of the MAT in providing the Wandsworth Sensory Support Service through Linden Lodge School.

The proposal was to revise clause 4a from:

'.. or schools specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with Special Educational needs', to

'.. or schools specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with Special Education Needs whether in the school or in the wider community in behalf of third parties'

The Board of Trustees unanimously agreed to approve the change. SE was asked to register the revised Articles with Companies House.

**Action: Stephen Elson to submit revised Articles to Companies House**

**Standards Committee**

**8. Headteacher's Report**

Linden Lodge

DR presented the report and gave an overview of the previous year. Trustees noted that Linden Lodge had been judged as at least good with increasing numbers of areas of school practice which have become or moving to outstanding. The key areas moving forward were:

- To move the school from good to outstanding in all areas
- Building a sustainable outstanding provision
- Building capacity in leadership
- Focus on continuous self-improvement

The report was contained attendance figures, exclusion information, education reports from notable staff and Trustee visit reports. The report was noted to have been viewed at the Local Governing Body Committee.

The governing body reviewed the report. DR reported by exception and advised on an increase in the number of referrals to the visual impairment and the impact in this regard.

### Southfields Academy

WG presented the Principal and Headteacher's Report which contained the following:

- Attendance figures
- Exclusions
- Staff departures
- Senior Leadership Team Reports

Trustees received a summary of achievements and noted that the KS4 results were positive. The headline measure, P8 was +0.25 which indicated that on average students at Southfields achieved a quarter of a grade higher across each of their subjects, compared with students who had similar across the nation. Incremental improvements continued to be made post-16 despite the challenges of the new Level 3 qualifications and the removal of numerous qualifications to choose from. At A Level, 23% achieved A\*/A, an increase from 2017. In vocational qualification 51% of students achieved the Distinction\* grade and 74% of students achieved D\*/D grades which compared favourably with other secondary schools.

Challenges related to the high numbers' caseload of safeguarding concerns. There is a team of eight staff who support students and their families. Regular meetings are being held and minuted, a copy of which is sent to the Chair. Trustees noted that the single central register is up to date and that all staff are DBS compliant. The mental health needs of some students and WG advised that Southfields is the lead school for a new mental health initiative, supported by the SW London Health Steering Group. As a result, additional resources have been provided and from January a mental health worker will spend time in the Academy working with staff and students. In response to a question, Trustees were advised that mental health issues ranged from basic anxiety to exam stress or self-harm.

WG reported that there were also challenges relating to the sixth form funding from the DfE as the needs of some students go beyond that provided in the classroom. Investment has been made in nurturing, counselling and managing student behaviour mostly due to social, emotional and mental well-being needs. Trustees noted that there is no funding available to provide this service.

Trustees asked about the LED and RUS numbers for 2018. Whilst mostly encouraging, the Year 7 numbers had risen to 296 as opposed to 152 the previous year. It was noted that the cohort had increased by 33% however, the bad behaviour for this group had increased by 95%. JV advised that a number of students with EHCP's had been taken on. A number of interventions are in place and NQTs are being encouraged to log all behaviour incidents.

Trustees asked about the Year 11 data which largely showed good results for most art and science subjects and were surprised at the lower results for Computing considering the popularity of computing gaming. JV advised that computing at the school was largely to do with programming.

Trustees asked what was being done to develop student's 'cultural capital' and were advised that the active steps were being taken in this area to include using homework tasks and accelerated reading. Trustees were pleased to note students were responding well, and a conversation was had about how best to bring parents on board in this regard. JV reported that Larry Davis had recently held a Parents Forum meeting and that at least 20 parents had attended.

Trustees asked what additional learning opportunities were in place to help with students who were eager to themselves and were advised that they were able to stay late or come into school early. Steps are also being taken to raise the aspiration of students and create suitable role models. JV gave a number of examples of successful student and Trustees noted the significant efforts being made to support students and obtain good outcomes.

The Trustee Board resolved to receive the report.

## **9. Development Plan and Raising Attainment Plan (RAP)**

### Linden Lodge Development Plan

DR presented the Plan and advised the headings had been aligned with that of the Ofsted framework and separated between objectives, actions, accountability, responsibility, success criteria, impact and resources. Trustees complimented DR on the format and the report which was comprehensive and easy to understand.

The Trustee Board resolved to receive the Plan.

### Southfields Academy RAP

WG presented the RAP and advised that it had been drafted so it could be separated and shared at department level. Trustees requested that a summary sheet was added to future reports.

**Action: Wanda Golinska to provide a summary / exception report to accompany future RAP's**

The Trustee Board resolved to receive the RAP.

## **10. Inclusion and SEND Trustee**

SH was nominated, seconded and duly elected as the Trustee lead for Inclusion and SEND.

## Finance and Operational Committee

### 11. **Final Accounts and Audit – Southfields Academy**

The Board of Trustees received the audit and final accounts for Southfields Academy. As with previous years the external audit had been carried out by Landau Baker. An interim audit had been carried out in June and final audit in October. Trustees noted that Landau Baker had produced the final accounts following the final audit.

#### Audit – Southfields Academy

Trustees received the final audit and in response to a question were advised that the queries relating to the interim audit had been answered. The final report had one recommendation relating to a system technicality that SE was working to resolve. Trustees thanked the finance team for an excellent result.

Trustees asked about school lettings and referred to the income received by Linden Lodge for Harris Swim School and the hire of the Isobel Centre together with similar incomes from Southfields. A query was raised as to whether the MAT had reached the £50,000 annual limit and would thus be liable for tax for this income. SE advised that he had sought some initial advice which suggested that Academies are not taxed in the same way as charities, although they were subject to some charity law. Following discussions, SE agreed to investigate and report back.

**Action: Stephen Elson to report back on whether the MAT is liable for tax on income from lettings**

SE gave an update on future developments and advised that employer contributions to teachers' pensions will increase (amount not yet known). The DfE will provide funding to academies, maintained schools and colleges for the period covered by the current spending review period (i.e. up to March 2020). Future funding will depend on the next spending review due in 2019.

Trustees spoke about the dip in student numbers in 2016/17 and noted that a bad year in student numbers lasted for 5 years. Trustees asked whether there would become a point in the future where some courses would not be viable to run. JV advised that courses were overfilled but there had been occasions where courses had been closed.

Trustees asked whether there was be a threshold for refusing to take students and were advised that risk assessment would be undertaken, and a decision made depending on the outcome.

#### 2017/18 Final Accounts – Southfields Academy

SE presented the report and highlighted the following:

- Current assets including cash at the bank and debts owing totalled £8,262,998 at the end of August 2018
- Creditors were owed £485,063 at the end of August 2018. The majority of this is NI and pension payments related to August payroll which are paid to HMRC the following month
- The net cash position for 2017-18 was a loss of £983,411. Compared with a net budgeted loss for the year of £1,608,000

- Overall staff costs reduced from £8,471,054 in 2016-17 to £8,229,854 in 2017-18.
- Staff numbers reduced from 216 to 214
- The Teaching School is now shown as a separate item. The 2017-18 positive balance is £59,862

Trustees spoke about the income from Charitable activities. It was noted that the income from such activities in 2018 was £8,110,559 against that for 2017 which was £9,948,710 and Trustees asked whether there was a reason for the lower income or whether 2017 was an exceptional year. SE responded that it was the other way around in that in 2018 there was a low intake of students and that the Year 7 intake has risen again which meant income is up again in 2018/19.

The Board of Trustees resolved to approve the Southfields Academy 2017/18 accounts.

## **12. Finance Report 2018-19**

SE presented the report and advised that the DfE have said that Trusts should produce monthly financial reports for the Chair of the trust and bi-monthly for trustees. The MATs monthly report will also be checked by the external auditors. Trustees noted that Southfields were able to meet this requirement and that it would take a little time for the Linden Lodge accounts to be academy ready and the school needed to convert their financial systems to that needed for an academy. Work is underway to make the adjustment. The main aim is to get Linden Lodge ready for external audit. Trustees noted that the interim external audit will take place in June 2019.

### Linden Lodge 2018-19 Forecast

Due to the reasons outlined above, the forecast was incomplete.

Linden Lodge's cashflow has been a concern because of the nature of special school funding. Steps have been taken to ensure that funding was received from all of the local authorities that place children at the school.

### Linden Lodge Cash Flow Forecast

As at 27 November 2018, Linden Lodge has £1,772,010 in its current account. £1million will be moved onto a 32-day account deposit account which should earn a small amount of interest but can be accessed with 32 days' notice. The policy will be to keep around £700,000 in the current account.

Once the carry forward has been received from Wandsworth Council, an appropriate amount of funds on longer-term deposit to earn more interest.

### Southfields Academy 2018-19 Forecast

This forecast was received and noted to be based on the current expenditure and known patterns of expenditure. As it is still early in the financial year, it is hoped that in-year savings will be found in non-staffing areas. There is a known underspend in the Teaching Staff budget as the budget was set to reflect a 3.5% pay award for all staff.

## Southfields Academy Cash Flow Forecast

The current account balance as at 27 November 2018 is £810,168. The on-going policy will be to keep an approximate minimum of £700,000, broadly equivalent to one month's salaries, in the current account. Southfields currently has £7,430,000 on deposit.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the report.

### **13. Health & Safety Report and MAT Policy**

The MAT Health & Safety Policy is being written with the help of XSELV Ltd who act as the MAT's health and safety consultants. A service level agreement is in place for them to carry out one health & safety inspection per year at each school and also includes unlimited support. Initially the hope was that one policy could be developed for the two schools, but advice had since been received which confirms that two separate policies are needed. SE agreed to present the Health & Safety Policy's for both schools at the next meeting.

**Action: Stephen Elson to present the Health & Safety Policy for both schools to the March meeting**

#### Linden Lodge

The most recent health & safety inspection took place in July 2018 whether the school achieved a 'Satisfactory' report, achieving 61 – 80% compliance. The premises team and School Business Manager are working through the recommendations (as outlined as an appendix to the report).

A new fire and evacuation and fire strategy has been developed and disseminated to the whole school. Fire wardens are being identified in some of the Centres.

The current Safety Mark certificate expired on 9 November 2018 and an inspection was carried out on 13 and 14 November 2018.

The work carried out over the summer holidays was noted alongside current premises matters.

There were no incidents to report.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the report.

#### Southfields

A list of the recent checks and works was noted. There were no incidents to report.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the report.

### **14. Risk Matrix**

SE presented the risk matrix will had been reviewed and commented on by GD and ST. Trustee's noted the report was thorough and had been conveniently organised into strategic and reputational risks, operational risks, compliance risks and fiscal risks.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the report.

**15. GDPR Update**

Trustees noted that a GDPR Policy was in place and any items related to this matter would be reported to the Board by exception. Trustees asked about the DPO and were advised that it was Larry Davis.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the verbal report.

**16. Other MAT Policies**

MAT policies will be presented to the Board as required. The Board spoke about the need to for a Trustee to attend Safer Recruitment Training, and LB reported that she had receive this training.

The Board of Trustees resolved to note the verbal report.

**17. Any other urgent business**

SH encouraged Trustees to attend all relevant training as provided by the Local Authority.

Trustees were advised on the changes to the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) guidance and SE undertook to circulate the guidance and to keep a record of Trustees who have confirmed they have read and understood the document. JV agreed to provide a short update on the changes at the March meeting.

**Action: Stephen Elson to circulate the revised KCSIE guidance and asked Trustees to sign or email to confirm they had read and understood the document**

**Action: Jackie Valin to give an update on the KCSIE guidance at the March meeting**

**18. Confidential Items of Business**

There were no matters for discussion under this item

**19. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was noted as 6pm on Wednesday 13 March 2019.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting	
Chair's signature	
Chair's name	
Date	

