

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING OF MONKSDOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON THURSDAY 29th SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 2.00PM AT THE SCHOOL

PRESENT

Martin Reynolds - Chair
Jacquie Price – Headteacher
Joanne Leadbetter
Adam Smith
Jane Moores
Josh Cliff
Mathew Allen
Ashley Duffy
Gill Stewart

Also Present

George Allen – Clerk

22/FG01 WELCOME

Action

All attendees were welcomed to the meeting.

The Headteacher explained that this special meeting of the Governing Board had been arranged to consider the recent government Education White Paper and the proposals that all schools will convert to academies by 2030.

The Governing Board agreed at its last meeting to meet in September 2022 to consider the proposals contained within the government White Paper and its implications for the school.

22/FG02 CONSIDERATION OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were accepted from and

22/FG03 CONFIDENTIALITY

Governors were reminded of the need for confidentiality when discussing issues and the main item of this meeting.

All

22/FG04 NOTICE OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business

22/FG05 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Interest

22/FG06 THE PROSED DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIES IN ENGLAND

The Headteacher provided the opening report on the proposed development of academies in England and how this could affect Monksdown Primary School. Arising:

- I. The government Education White Paper seeks for all schools to convert to academies It also aims establish Multi-Academy Trusts to which virtually all schools will join.

- II. The main points from the White Paper are: Excellent Teachers, Focus on Literacy and Numeracy, Focus on Barriers to Learning, Ambitious Targets. Plans for MATs are key. The White Paper states that delivery will involve: *a fully trust led system with a single regulatory method: role for each part of the school system: Education Investment Areas.*

The relevant section is Paragraph 147 which states: *'we want all schools to be in or joining a strong trust by 2030 and we will engage with the sector'* on how this is achieved.

- III. A number of factors need to be considered including:
- Academies are here to stay.
 - Academy orders will increase.
 - LCC accepts that academies orders will accelerate over the next period
 - Funding for local authorities is diminishing.
 - Archdiocese shortly concludes its First Stage Consultations on establishing CMAT's.
 - Schools are being encouraged to join Multi-Academy Trusts
- IV. Local authorities can establish their own Multi-Academy Trusts via the legislation. EIA's have been established, to increase attainment and improve educational provision
- V. Trusts will be required to work constructively with all other relevant partners
- VI. Academisation needs to be considered for reasons including, the contents of the White Paper its impact upon the management, financing and staffing of schools. Now is the time to consult.
- VII. The development of national government plans and the implications for Monksdown Primary School was explained. Governors were made aware of the possible timeframe for conversion.
- VIII. **The first formal stage of the consultation commenced on Friday 8th July** and relevant CMAT documents were distributed to stakeholders (documents had been distributed to all members of the St Charles Primary School Governing Board). Meaningful consultation is taking place with all partners, including Religious Orders.
- IX. **(The deadline for first stage feedback is 30th September 2022.** The first report is to be published in the autumn term 2022. Schools can also express an interest in converting during 2023. It is unlikely that there will be an acceleration of conversions to CMATs in 2023. Many schools will be awaiting the outcome of the second stage of the process.
- X. **The second stage consultation will commence in spring term 2023.** It will focus on the arrangements for establishing CMATs at individual school level. The final strategy is expected to be published in autumn term 2023. Governing Bodies will consider the outcomes of the stage two consultation process and, if appropriate, pass a resolution to convert to a CMAT. It is likely that increased numbers of schools will convert during 2024.
- It was emphasised that the Archdiocese is not enforcing this policy upon schools and that it is committed to the principles of subsidiarity and partnership working.)
- XI. (Formal consultation outlines that: CMATs will be based on geographical clusters, schools will join their allocated MAT, they can join at different times, CMATs will be cross phase and the names of CMATs will be suggested in conjunction with the Archdiocese.
- XII. A Working Group to consider the response to the consultations and the CMATs is being established in the autumn term 2022. Governors are welcome to apply to join the Group.
- XIII. Proposed CMAT Model: Knowsley 1. Lancashire 3. Liverpool 3 (including All Saints MAT).

St Helens 1. Pope St Francis Sefton 1. Wigan 1. Halton and Warrington 1.

A list of primary and secondary Catholic schools, in each of the respective geographical clusters, including St Charles Primary in CMAT 10, was contained in the documentation.)

- XIV. What will a MAT look like? It will consist of the following: Members, Trust Board, CEO and Central Team and Local Governing Body. There will also be Articles of Association and a Scheme of Delegation. The two existing and related MATs are St Joseph's MAT (which is a current temporary home for Catholic schools) and the All-Saints MAT, that includes Catholic schools and is managed in conjunction with the CofE Diocese.
- XV. The Board will consist of a group of Members. Their role will be set out in the Articles of Association. The Board is the decision-making body and will be the employer of central staff and those within its academies. The Board will be the academy trusts key strategic decision-maker.
- XVI. The role of the CEO and the Headteacher within a MAT was described to governors. The CEO will be an experienced educationalist and outstanding strategic leader. The Headteacher will continue to have a key and critical role. The functions of the Central Team were highlighted to governors. It was also stated that staff review and prospective changes in some staff roles in schools converting to a MAT is likely to ensue.
- XVII. The consultation is current and meaningful. It will have important implications for schools. The response from governors would be welcomed.

22/FG07 QUESTIONS FROM GOVERNORS

The following questions were raised by governors:

Q. What will happen if there is no strong MAT within an EIA?

A. Schools that are supported via.

Q. How realistic are these plans and what are the timescales for implementation?

A. The bishops in Liverpool were the last to engage in the discussions around academisation. The bishops are committed to the retention of catholic identity, to the protection of Catholic schools and its ethos and to supporting local governance and decision-making.

Q. What happens to the funding reserves of those schools converting to a MAT?

A. The funding reserves will remain with the individual school which is a partner in the MAT.

Q. How will the staffing levels and the delivery of the curriculum be affected by conversion?

A.

Q. Will school reserves and budgets be managed by the Headteacher or the MAT CEO?

A. The CEO will have managerial responsibility for the management of funding and budgets. This will be achieved in conjunction with Headteachers and the Board. Each individual school will have its own bank account and budget (the budgets can also be 'pooled'). The CEO will have significant managerial and strategic responsibilities and will work closely with Headteachers. MATs are planned to not represent a top-down approach.

Q. How does each school in a MAT, fund the support for services (such as those currently received for finance through the Local Authority or via School Improvement)?

A. Top slicing of school funds will ensue. This is currently practiced at the St Joseph's MAT.

Funding for resources such as the CEO and the Central Team will be funded via the top slicing of budgets. For example, the current contribution from partner schools in the St Joseph's MAT is 5% of budget. All Saints MAT adopt a similar approach.

Q. Will MATs be taking all responsibility for staff terms and conditions and pensions etc?

A. MATs will be responsible for staff terms and conditions, pensions and any associated employment criteria. TUPE conditions will apply to staff at a school converting to a CMAT.

Q. Will schools be able to continue to buy in services such as those currently provided by SIL?

A. Schools can purchase external services, and this will be under the auspices of the CEO, the Central Team and the Trust Board.

Q. Will schools continue to employ staff such as a School Business Manager?

A. There will be consultations with all staff affected by conversion but roles such as School Business Manager and school office posts could be subject to 'greater turbulence'.

The Central Team in a MAT will be assuming greater responsibility for schools.

Q. What is the status of an Headteacher of a school within a CMAT?

A. Headteachers will retain a critical role within schools. Although responsibilities may change, under the management of a CEO, the Headteacher will continue to have a very important role. The management structure of a CMAT is contained within the circulated documentation.

Q. How will the role of the Governing Board change?

A. Governance will change considerably. Governing Boards will be required to pass a resolution to convert to a CMAT. To ensure subsidiarity and partnership working, and although it is not a mandatory requirement, the church is committed to the retention of local Governing Bodies and for governors to become involved in Boards. Foundation Directors will also be sought.

Q. Monksdown Primary School has an excellent and well development curriculum. How will this change if the school converts to a MAT?

A. The clear aim is to continue to offer an excellent curriculum. The proposed MAT model needs to provide more detail on this issue. It is the type of issue that governors can highlight in their feedback to the MAT plans and as part of the first stage consultations.

Q. What will be the future role of the local authority?

A. As stated in the presentation, the roles of local authority are currently diminishing. Local authorities will have a lesser involvement in schooling in the future following the greater development of MAT's. Government has now enabled L.A's to establish a MAT

All governors were strongly advised to read the documentation, with its plans and deadlines, and participate within the CMAT consultations.

All

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3...pm