

**THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST**  
**COMPANY NUMBER: 7359755**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Meeting of the Board of Directors</b>	<b>Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
<b>Room</b>	TSAT boardroom & Via Teams Call	<b>Time</b>	5pm
<b>Present</b>	Gerard Newman (GN) (Chair), Stuart Gardner (SG), Kaye Bettey (KB), Peter Martin (PM), Clive Star (CS), Andrew Medhurst (AM),	<b>Clerk</b>	Jennifer Coates
<b>Apologies accepted</b>	Steve Geary (SGY), Ian Mason (IM), Derek Morrison (DM), Natasha Hurtado (NH), David Glassey	<b>In attendance</b>	Lee Miller (LM), Mandy Gage (MG), Kelly Denton (KD), Ashley Hall (AH), Michelle Smith (MS)

<b>Key Points Discussed and Action Items</b>								
<b>No.</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action/Discussion</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>				
1.	<b>Declaration of business interests</b>	No additional declarations of business interests.						
2.	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b>	<p>GN welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Steve Geary, David Glassey, Ian Mason &amp; Natasha Hurtado. Apologies were also accepted from Janet Perry &amp; Jay Davenport. Absence of Derek Morrison was noted.</p> <p>GN acknowledged the resignation of Natasha Hurtado from the Board and thanked her for her service. SG remaining on RMET Board for one more term.</p> <p>New Trustee in process of appointment is Andy Minchin, CEO of Beyond Schools Trust. Interviewed by PM &amp; GN, and the recommendation for him to join the Board has been approved by the Trust Members. SG will be joining the Beyond Schools Trust Board.</p>						
3.	<b>Minutes and matters arising</b>	<p>The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting from May.</p> <p><i>Action KD to circulate the minutes from the March Board meeting for remote ratification.</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="539 1257 1756 1385"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Action</b></th> <th><b>Update</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Exec to present back the final strategic plan for presentation at the leadership conference</td> <td>Completed as an additional and confidential item to the finance committee meeting.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Update</b>	Exec to present back the final strategic plan for presentation at the leadership conference	Completed as an additional and confidential item to the finance committee meeting.	<i>KD</i>	<i>31/08/24</i>
<b>Action</b>	<b>Update</b>							
Exec to present back the final strategic plan for presentation at the leadership conference	Completed as an additional and confidential item to the finance committee meeting.							

		Feedback at this meeting about Goodwin	Part of todays update.		
4.	<b>CEO Report</b>	<p>SG presented the CEO report which contained the following key information:</p> <p><u>Positives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achieved 'National' as a Trust for KS2 RWM.</li> <li>- Phonics results have improved but are not at national level.</li> <li>- Head of Finance has secured £600k funding from the ESFA for BET school deficit budgets. Board wanted to note their appreciation and thanks to Doug Stewart for the work on this.</li> <li>- Trust conference last week was very successful.</li> <li>- South West schools are now, broadly, are onboarded successfully this year.</li> <li>- MSH in place at The Portsmouth Academy and leading the South Hub. We are seeing improvements at TPA, although it does remain a challenging school.</li> <li>- 2 new Headteachers have started at Victory and Goodwin Academy.</li> <li>- Recruited a new Headteacher for New Horizons Childrens Academy.</li> <li>- Agreed strategy to address the Trust financial challenges that the sector is facing.</li> <li>- Temporary fix of sink hole issues at PHSG.</li> <li>- Very successful 150-year celebration at PHSG.</li> <li>- PHSG judged as 'Good' in recent Ofsted inspection.</li> <li>- Maritime should be ready for September launch – although delay with elements of the build.</li> <li>- Very positive IB results at RGS.</li> <li>- Approved Victory business case for SRP and sixth form expansion.</li> </ul> <p><u>Minus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some schools significantly below National for KS2 reading, writing and maths including New Horizons Portsmouth, All Faiths, Meon Junior and Kings Ash.</li> <li>- Phonics results did not attain National.</li> <li>- Non-selective secondary schools are predicting results that are below national and some below floor.</li> <li>- Impact of budget changes needed to secure a balanced budget from 2025 on services and schools.</li> <li>- Plympton was judged as 'RI' in recent Ofsted inspection, but behaviour judgement has</li> </ul>			

improved to Good.

Interesting

- In year admissions are impacting KS2 results.
- [REDACTED]
- HGS co-ed delayed due to election – will now be 2026 launch.
- Coroners case at RGS found no fault.
- Resignation from Headteacher at Plympton Academy.

24/25 Trust Improvement Plan

- A Year of Transition – Creating strong effective schools, united by a common belief in Transforming Life Chances of children through the application of metacognition approach to education. Develop a Trust culture built on the foundations of ‘Strong Policies’, ‘Strong Leaders’ and ‘Strong Services’.

Ofsted – Schools in window this year

- AFS – DM. [REDACTED]
- CCA – PM. [REDACTED]
- GWA – KB. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Gov Comment – Following a visit to the school last Friday, behaviour was much improved from my previous visit to Goodwin. In regards to outcomes, I looked at the Curriculum plans and they looked high quality and I could see how this would convert into lesson plans. The main challenge around outcomes is attendance and this is a focus moving forward.

SG Comment – Attendance is impacting all of our non-selective schools which is why it is part of our strategic plan.

Gov Comment – In regards to Goodwin, their PAN is 850 and are anticipating 800. In sixth form they have 44 students and are currently looking at an increase.

MS Comment – They are aspiring for 45-50 students to go into Year 12.

LM Comment – We need to review this when we have the confirmed number of students.

Gov Comment – I was really struck by how enthusiastic the Headteacher is and how he is getting

		<p>hold of the issues so we owe him support in what he is doing.</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- TPA – GN. [Redacted]</li></ul> <p>MS Comment – We have undertaken a huge amount of work in impact of curriculum. Behaviour is improving but there are still students that require support and intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- MIS – DG. [Redacted]</li><li>- PGN – AM. [Redacted]</li></ul> <p>SG proposed the discussion about assigning Board Members to particular schools so Trustees were keeping an eye on particular schools in the run up to inspections. <i>The decisions for this have been added against each school name above.</i> <i>Action SG to liaise with KD about requested support from Directors in regards to their role as link Trustee for the schools in the Ofsted window.</i></p> <p><b>Gov Q – In regards to TPA, it says that the school has 51% students who qualify for FSM, but only 7% SEND, is that correct?</b> <b>SG A – The school is currently undertaking significant work to ensure that they are identifying the appropriate student with SEND.</b></p> <p><u>Curriculum Standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- GLD – results highly variable due to starting points. Outcomes at All Faiths were lower than predicted and actions are in place to improve these moving forward. GLD needs to be</li></ul>	SG	16.10.24
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accurate as it will be one of the few data points to rely on to review progress by the time students reach Year 6 since the removal of statutory end of key stage one data.

**Gov Q – For GLD we have dropped below national for the first time in 3 years, was this expected by Heads and what was the reasons behind it?**

**SG A – It was not expected at All Faiths. With others they are seeing continuing deteriorating habits of standards for students joining the school and they are serving very deprived communities.**

- Phonics – Results have improved from 73% - 76% which is positive. Results are not yet at national.
- Concerns remain around results at AFS, PBI, MIS and MWI. NHP and KAA are also below national but they are serving highly deprived cohorts.

**Gov Q – In regards to All Faiths and New Horizons having a three-year failing trend for phonics and maths, what is in place next year to improve the results?**

**SG A – Need a change in culture from the Board. We are not coming with a strategy for individual schools. This is about the executive team holding that school to account, working with the regional or deputy regional director, looking at their plans. The focus needs to be how are we holding the school to account and ensuring that they are able to improve going forward. The answer is that we want to see that school improvement plan and how they are addressing those particular issues when that is ready for September. It is not a top-down solution.**

**MS Comment – In the South we have met as a group of schools and we are sharing good practice and coming up with a timeline and an action plan that all schools will support each other with.**

**SG Comment – If the Board wish to see improvement plans for specific schools as they are concerned with their performance, we can arrange that.**

Yr. 4 Multiplication Check

- Last year we were well below national and this year we have performed well above national. Schools that performed particularly well are CCA, GCA and PBJ. Some schools remain below national which were NHA and FZM.

KS2 SATS

- RWM results have significantly improved and at national for the first time since 2019.

- Schools that performed very well are CCA, GCA, NHA, PBJ and CSA. KAA are below national but in context of the cohort the results are positive.
- AFS and NHP are below expectations. NHP has been impacted by late admissions which has impacted results.
- Trust Reading and Maths are above national.
- Trust Writing is below national.
- We are also at national for deprived children.

KS4 Predictions

- Selective schools predicting above or well above national P8 schools.
- Non-selective schools all predicting below national P8 schools, some below floor.
- BRX predictions show a decline in progress.
- Curriculum and Outcomes Policy is a priority to be sure that we were moving into an improvement space and a clear document and toolkit clearly stating expectations around school improvement plans and impact.
- RGS IB results are really positive and an improvement on last year. One student got full marks 45/45 which puts him in the top 0.7% of the population globally that take the qualification.

Issues (presented by exception)

- Trust Improvement Plan 23/24
- Trust capacity and growth
- TSfE update
- Behaviour
- QA – note directive for AGB to follow up reports
- CPD, teaching & learning
- Safeguarding
- Attendance

**Gov Q – In regards to the growth strategy now, we have been in a period of consolidation, how is this being perceived now?**

**SG A – The current position is we feel able to continue the conversation with PLT as it fits the strategy with creating an ‘East’ region hub. We have made progress this year with some results but there are still areas of improvement required in terms of some schools Ofsted outcomes and secondary outcomes. We are not actively looking to grow.**

[Redacted text]

**Gov Q – In regards to Safeguarding, the heat maps focus on staff training. Are there metrics around safeguarding incidents at school level to triangulate that data?**

**SG A – Previously we have reported on the numbers of different safeguarding incidences in schools but this has since been removed. This data is to show the board how secure safeguarding is in the school as opposed to the different safeguarding incidences. This is reported at a local level.**

**Gov Q – Are there other things we should be looking at in regards to safeguarding?**

**SG A – This information gives you the information required about effectiveness of safeguarding in schools. The heatmap does show some schools as red due to the levels of challenge but those cases are being dealt with.**

**Gov Q – In regards to the impact of the two week half term in October, what is the impact of time for learning for students and also the impact on staff as well from September 2025?**

**SG A – All schools are taking that reallocation of time. We are taking one week of teaching time and redistributing those hours across the school year to allow for a combination of teacher training, MAT collaboration and interventions with students. We have seen a significant change post-covid of staff offering out of hours support to pupils. This way, we are using directed time and it gives staff directed time to do those additional interventions with students.**

**Gov Q – To check my understanding, students will have less teaching and learning time, but the time that they have will be of improved focus and quality?**

**SG A – It is a combination of improved focus and quality generally but also, for those year groups that are in examination years, they will have more teaching and learning time guaranteed than what they do currently.**

**Gov Q – Is there any disadvantage to staff who will have less classroom time?**

**SG A – No. A teacher may lose 2 hours of teaching from Year 10s across the year, but gain the opportunity to be with Year 11s every afternoon for a year.**

**Gov Q – Does that apply to TAs as well? IF we are investing this week in CPD etc for Teachers. If TA's are not included, do they work less time and receive less money?**

**LM A – We would deal with this on a case-by-case basis. Some TA's may want to retain their term time only contract which would result in a weeks less pay. Some will want to work with the school to use additional hours for clubs and interventions. There are some who will be able to support with activity clubs that run during October half term.**

**SG A – The two-week element, this will support recruitment and retention of teachers. Other schools are using creative methods to support this.**





[REDACTED]

PM proposed the decision for consideration for the Board to approve the 24/25 Budget and the financial strategy reviews.

*The board unanimously approved the 24/25 Budget and the financial strategy review.*

LM Comment – My intention over the course of the year is to provide a standing update on all of the reviews and talk about the overarching impact and any challenges so you can stay close to the decisions we are making as an executive team.

C. Operations (KB)

- Digital Strategy was presented to the Operations Committee and there are concerns about the delivery of this in light of the wider financial pressures facing the Trust.

D. Staffing, Pay and Professional Growth (GN)

- Eploy is implemented and supporting recruitment.
- People Survey has had a strong response and provided specific areas of focus moving forward which is incorporated to the people strategy.
- Re-tender of Payroll and HR system has now been issued.
- Risk of running current system for another year.
- Risk of teacher age profile of teachers looking to retire in the next 5-10 years.
- Discussed long term sickness which remains an issue for some schools.

E. Audit and Risk (PM)

- The Committee reviewed the risks including that of the financial position,

F. Governance and Compliance (GN)

- Attendance – As a Trust we are close to national, but primaries are generally at national and non-selective secondaries are below and this correlates to outcomes.
- Non-compliance identified around safer recruitment had been rectified.
- New Governance Structure and nearly all AGB and RAB boards have been filled.
- Significant increase in GDCs this academic year – up 358% on previous year.

**Gov Q – The dates for the AGB and Chairs of RAB, is that in the dates document sent out?**

		<p><b>KD A – It is for RABs, AGB dates will come from the schools.</b></p> <p>G. <u>Pupil Voice Committee (GN)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent contributions from students.</li> <li>- Discussion focussed on the be your best self-journals, charities, food service, earth alliance, reading and anti-bullying strategy.</li> <li>- All pupils involved have put together a good set of ideas and proposals which have been acted on including a review of energy usage across the schools.</li> <li>- There are inconsistencies in engagement across the Trust and the Teams forum can be problematic.</li> <li>- Overall, it has been a very positive first year of pupil voice committee.</li> </ul> <p>H. <u>Culture and Development Committee (GN)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewed the People Strategy.</li> <li>- Reviewed the Behaviour Principals provided by MG for schools to use for next academic year.</li> <li>- Agreed the Onboarding of Lodestar was completed.</li> <li>- Curledge Street &amp; Kings Ash sign off is awaiting implementation of the TSN.</li> <li>- Paignton Academy and CRGS require further work before sign off.</li> </ul>		
6.	<b>ROIs from RGBs</b>	The Board reviewed the Risks, Opportunities & Issues from the Regional Governing Body meetings.		
7.	<b>Risk Register</b>	The Board reviewed the summary risk register provided. <i>Action LM/KD to circulate the full risk register to the Board and invite any comment.</i>	LM	31.08.24
8.	<b>Appointment of Governors</b>	<p>KD presented the Appointment of Governors required for decision which contained the following key information:</p> <p><u>Decisions Required</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appoint Chair to TSAT Board for 24/25 – Gerard Newman <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Gerard Newman as the Chair of the TSAT Board for the academic year 24/25. GN abstained from the vote as it pertained to him.</i></li> <li>- Appoint Vice Chair of TSAT Board for 24/25 – Peter Martin <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Peter Martin as the Vice Chair of the TSAT Board for the academic year 24/25. PM abstained from the vote as it pertained to him.</i></li> </ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appointment of Ashley Hall to Board of Directors <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Ashley Hall as a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Directors.</i></li>   <li>- Jo Allen to Culture &amp; Development Committee <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Jo Allen to the Culture &amp; Development Committee.</i></li>   <li>- Helena Ortega Izquierdo &amp; Nick Forward to Maritime IMB <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Helena Ortega Izquierdo and Nick Forward to the Maritime IMB.</i></li>   <li>- Appointment of all Chairs of RABs Ashley Hall – South East <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Ashley Hall as Chair of the South East RAB.</i></li>   <li>Peter Martin – South <i>Governors unanimously agreed to appoint Peter Martin as Chair of the South RAB.</i></li>   <li>Clive Star – South West <i>This was ratified remotely.</i></li>   <li>- Appointment of all Chairs of AGBs (other than Penbridge which does not yet have an identified Chair)</li> </ul> <p><u>South West</u>  Furzeham: Mary Lennighan-Wood  Paignton Primaries: Matt Harbour  Paignton: Tracey Litt  Brixham: Anthony Prowse  PHSG: Victoria Sargeant  Lodestar: Andrew Medhurst  Plympton: Janina Villalta</p> <p><u>South East</u>  Goodwin: David Day  RGS: Peter Martin  TVA: Richard Holdsworth  HGS: Jo Allen</p>		
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		<u>AOB</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student at Paignton has been selected to represent the Gymnastics Team GB at the Paris Olympics. A card has been sent to her from the Board to congratulate her.</li> <li>- We have sent flowers to Clare Brinklow on behalf of the Board to thank her for everything she has done this year with RGS in light of the challenging year the team there have faced.</li> </ul>		
11.	<b>Items for next agenda</b>	In addition to the standing items the agenda will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update on the financial strategy</li> <li>- Update on the HR/Payroll tender</li> </ul>		
12.	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 5pm. The meeting closed at 6:58pm		

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
1.	3	Action KD to circulate the minutes from the March Board meeting for remote ratification.	KD	31.08.24
2.	4	Action SG to liaise with KD about requested support from Directors in regards to their role as link Trustee for the schools in the Ofsted window.	SG/KD	16.10.24
3.	7	Action LM/KD to circulate the full risk register to the Board and invite any comment.	LM/KD	31.08.24