



## MINUTES OF THE FEDERATION TRUST MEETING

Thursday 14 May 2026, 8.15am  
Leeds, Harington

### PRESENT

Liz Birchall, Rob Guthrie, Thomas Heath, Guy Magrath, Alex Mould, Clive Norgaard Morton, Mark Tinkler (Vice Chair), Stuart Williams (Executive Principal).

### IN ATTENDANCE

Oliver Teasel (Head of Harington School), Chris Wilson (Chief Finance Officer), Kelly Jackson (Head of Harington School), Sheryl Wilson (Governance Professional)

#### 1. WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mark Tinkler welcomed everyone to the meeting and chaired the meeting in the absence of Andrew Holt. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Andrew Cross and Andrew Holt. Liz Birchall and Thomas Heath were welcomed to their first Trust meeting have been appointed as Co-opted Directors.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the Trust meeting held on Thursday 26 March were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

#### 4. MATTERS ARISING

Two staff were appointed to the role of Project Lead for Academic Excellence. The implementation and impact of the more able programme will be monitored by the local governing body.

#### 5. GOVERNANCE PROFESSIONAL

A recent application was considered and their positive engagement history noted. A discussion took place on the skill set detailed on the application vs the current board. It was agreed not to appoint as a trustee at this stage but to offer a role on the Catmose Primary Local Governing Body, subject to candidate agreement.

Trustees discussed the balance and diversity of the Trust Board and agreed to conduct a full board skills audit before any future recruitment takes place and to consider succession planning.

Rob Guthrie advised that he had made the decision to resign from his role of governor (Harington Local Governing Body) and trustee with effect from the last meeting of the

academic year – Thursday 2 July 2026. Rob Guthrie asked to be considered as a potential future Member, which will be discussed by Members at the meeting in July.

## 6. PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

### Trust Governance Structure

#### Summary:

- Clarification of:
  - Members vs Trustees vs LGB vs Resources Committee roles.
- Work underway:
  - Align Scheme of Delegation, role descriptors, and Terms of Reference.
- Need for clearer reporting (incl. resources/finance assurance).

#### Actions / Follow-up:

- Complete alignment work (next meeting):
  - Terms of Reference updates.
- Consider adding clear objectives to agendas.

### Catmose College

#### Summary:

- Strong performance overall:
  - Attendance above national.
  - Teaching strong; no major concerns.
  - Safeguarding pressures increasing (mental health, contextual issues).
- Counselling provision (£55k) showing attendance impact.
- Exams started successfully; JCQ inspection passed
- Staffing stable; recruitment positive.
- Behaviour strong (low suspensions/exclusions).
- Proposal:
  - Phased smartphone ban over 5 years.

#### Actions / Follow-up:

- Further discussion/decision on mobile phone policy with Catmose College LGB
- Continue monitoring safeguarding trends.
- Track impact of counselling provision.

## 7. HEAD OF HARINGTON SCHOOL UPDATE

### Summary:

- A levels underway; positive start.
- JCQ inspection passed.
- Recruitment strong (approx. 200 expected).
- Oxbridge outcomes:
  - Zero offers this year despite interview stage success.
- New action:
  - Structured Oxbridge programme from Year 10–13.

### Actions / Follow-up:

- Implement Oxbridge preparation programme (from Sept).
- Review outcomes next cycle.
- Trustees invited to support mock interviews (June).

## 8. SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FORM (HARINGTON SCHOOL)

### Summary:

- Application prepared and ready for submission.
- Need justified by local demand and growth.
- Consultation:
  - Mostly supportive.
  - Objections from Melton schools (impact concerns).
- Main risk:
  - Capital funding approval.
- Current financial risk:
  - Awaiting pupil growth funding - £100k.

### Decisions:

- Approved submission of application.

### Actions / Follow-up:

- Submit application to DfE.
- Monitor response and engage with case officer.
- Prepare for potential capital funding bid.
- Track pupil number adjustment funding (finance risk).

## 9. HEAD OF CATMOSE PRIMARY UPDATE

### Summary:

- Strong culture, enrichment, and wellbeing indicators.
- Significant staffing challenges mitigated through Federation support.
- SATs preparation robust despite disruption.
- Predicted outcomes:
  - Individual subjects: broadly in line with national.
  - Combined measure: expected improvement above 2025 and above national
- Key issue:
  - Combined R/W/M outcome (historical weakness).
  - Sustainability addressed:
    - Staffing adjustments planned for next year.
- School oversubscribed; strong reputation.

### Actions / Follow-up:

- Report final SATs results and progress measures.
- Confirm staffing model for sustained support.
- Consider holding a future trust meeting/site visit at the primary.

## 10. GOVERNANCE ROLES (APPROVAL)

### Summary:

- New role descriptors created for:
  - Trustees
  - Governors
  - Members
- Aligned with scheme of delegation and Academy Trust Handbook.

### Decisions:

- Approved.

### Actions / Follow-up:

- Trustees to review and provide feedback if needed.
- Next step: update committee Terms of Reference.

## 11. TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST

### Summary:

- DfE approval received for lease.
- Lease generates:

- £2,000/year income.
- Recovery of £10,000 legal costs.
- Some stakeholder sensitivity (radiation, consistency vs phone policy).

#### Decisions:

- Approved entering into lease.
- Delegated authority granted to the Accounting Officer and Company Secretary

#### Actions / Follow-up:

- Confirm mechanism for recovery of legal fees before signing.
- Sign lease.
- Prepare stakeholder communications

## 12. POLICIES

The below policies were ratified:

- Federation Safeguarding Policy – minor change
- Federation ICT Policy – mobile phone references updated

Major safeguarding update expected later in the academic year, (national changes).

#### Actions / Follow-up:

- Bring revised safeguarding policy back when national guidance updates.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Next meeting arrangements:

- Thursday 2 July:
  - Resources Committee – 2pm
  - Trust and Members meeting – 3pm
  - LGB meetings – 5pm
  - Followed by networking/buffet

#### Actions / Follow-up:

- Prepare for joint Members/Trust session.

#### Key Strategic Themes Identified

- Need for skills-based recruitment and succession planning
- Strengthening governance clarity and reporting lines
- Focus on primary outcomes (combined measure)

- Managing growth vs funding risk
- Increasing student wellbeing and safeguarding demands