



Standards Committee Meeting
Tuesday 21 January 2025 at 17:00 – 19:00
via MS Teams

Those Present:		
Naomi Cooper	Chair	NC
Victoria Morris	Director	VM
Phil Bradley	Director	PB
Rachel Potts	Director	RP
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
Michelle Smith	HR Manager	MS
Richard Webster	Strategic Transitions Lead	RW
Lyndsay Foster	Governance Clerk	LF
Apologies:		
No Apologies:		
Colin Bradley	Director	CB

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
<p>1.1. To receive apologies for absence</p> <p>No apologies were received</p>	
<p>1.2. To accept apologies for absence</p> <p>None.</p>	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
<p>2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered</p> <p>None.</p>	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
<p>3.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda</p> <p>There were no declarations of personal or business interest received.</p>	
4. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES	
<p>4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting:</p> <p>The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 16 July 24 were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>	
<p>4.2. Review of Action Tracker</p> <p>The outstanding actions on the action tracker were reviewed and updated.</p> <p>JT noted that item 5.1 would be better reviewed in the spring term to allow for more time. However, she mentioned that she has been meeting with the maths consultant on a monthly basis and has also joined the strategic board for the maths hub, ensuring a strong understanding and oversight of the ongoing work.</p>	
<p>4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes</p> <p>None raised.</p>	
5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
<p>5.1 The Collaborative School Improvement Update Report</p> <p>JT provided an overview of the collaborative school improvement framework delivery plan, data, progress report, and Enterprise Learning Institute. JT summarised the current activities and priorities agreed with the Headteachers during the away day in July.</p> <p>She noted that two schools, Lotus Academy and Endeavor Academy, joined in the autumn term, contributing to the increase in demand for support. All schools are working to increase their capacity to handle the demand where possible. She also mentioned that Crags Community School's pupil numbers are declining in line with national trends..</p> <p>JT highlighted the implementation of the new quality assurance and improvement delivery model, emphasising its role in streamlining school improvement efforts. JT also</p>	

mentioned the development of partnership improvement plans tailored for each school to address their specific needs.

JT outlined the successful establishment of links with various educational institutions, including Chartered College, Derby University, the Research Schools Network, and Sheffield Hallam University, focusing on evidence-informed practice and research. These collaborations are contributing to the schools' continuous improvement.

Additionally, JT noted that efforts are underway to upskill the workforce by offering more structured development pathways. This includes creating routes into teaching and identifying strategies to support the professional growth of teaching support staff, starting from apprenticeships through to Level 5 and Level 6 qualifications.

JT highlighted the evolving curriculum offer for Post-16 students. She emphasised the work being done to incorporate e-Sports into the curriculum and to develop a study programme tailored to support students transitioning into supported internships.

RW added that there is a strong focus on building essential skills, starting from age 14, to better prepare students for supported internships. He also discussed the recent collaboration with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), which has resulted in a draft plan aimed at providing students with a range of experiences both within and outside of Nexus MAT schools, further enhancing their readiness for future opportunities.

CEO asked RW about the evolving shape of SYMCA. Is there synergy between KS4 and KS5 leaders in our academies in pursuing a more strategic approach to careers and employability?

RW explained that efforts to unify the approach to careers and employability through SYMCA and collaboration across Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 leadership tiers have shown positive early signs. RW noted that the careers landscape across the combined authority had previously faced challenges due to changes in strategic leadership, but now the four representatives from the respective local authorities are aligned, particularly in the area of internships, all working towards shared goals.

RW highlighted practical steps being taken, including the introduction of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for Post-16 leads, fostering collaboration and best practice sharing. He mentioned specific initiatives, such as a "cook-along" day in Sheffield to facilitate shared experiences and a community allotment project designed to encourage teamwork and engagement among students.

CEO expressed support, emphasising that having a consistent and well-informed approach strengthens outcomes for more students and ensures a more strategic and cohesive offer across academies.

RW discussed the importance of collecting destinations data with JT, highlighting its relevance in shaping the curriculum and assessing its overall impact.

NC and RW are scheduled to meet with Sheffield Hallam University later this week to explore potential opportunities for Nexus MAT. This meeting is part of an ongoing effort

to strengthen connections and enhance collaboration for the benefit of students and staff.

VM asked with regards to the supported internships what quality assurance was insurance processes were in place?

RW noted that the quality of work is supported by the job coach, a lead within the educational setting, and a lead within the business setting. Regular weekly meetings are held to review the progress, alongside observations of the young person in the workplace. These ensure that the mentorship and support remain effective, with the job coach playing a central role in monitoring and guiding the process.

CEO highlighted the importance of the infrastructure and outlined the support Nexus MAT can offer employers to make these partnerships sustainable and successful.

RP asked about Quality Assurance improvement offer to schools, and clarity on the process of receiving feedback?

JT explained that feedback is received through various channels, often in the form of thank-you emails. Additionally, all headteachers have line management support that allow for feedback to flow through in a more impartial and systematic way. So far, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. JT emphasised that all the work being carried out by the Executive Assurance Partners aligns directly with what the schools and headteachers have specifically requested, ensuring that it meets their needs and expectations.

VM asked are key priorities driven by school leaders?

JT explained that the prioritisation process stems from the Trust's health check initiative. Each school is assigned two executive assurance partners who are external to the school. These partners conduct a thorough health check focusing on four key areas: Quality of Education, Leadership, Behaviour, and Personal Development. Following the health check, clear action points are identified. These action points are then integrated into the school's School Improvement Plan (SIP). The top two or three priorities from this process form the Partnership Improvement Plan (PIP). This ensured that the action plans were directly tied to the school's needs and are continuously monitored based on where the school currently stands in its development journey.

JT highlighted recent challenges outlined in the report, particularly noting a rise in aspirations from the trust's schools. However, this has brought about certain challenges, especially for schools with smaller cohorts. In such schools, it can be difficult to manage the logistics of delivering exams, including having a dedicated exam officer and maintaining the necessary infrastructure.

JT confirmed no changes to team capacity this year and highlighted the rationalisation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). These are now led by central team staff, ensuring their work aligns with the collaborative school improvement framework delivery plan and its priorities. Practitioner-driven network groups remain in place, while subject leads are expected to actively participate in the PLCs. Heads have agreed to this approach, and it has been working well in the first term.

NC asked what are the opportunities for schools that aren't putting themselves forward for the learning institute opportunities? Also, what are the plans to encourage this?

JT responded that Claire Garbutt has been meeting with heads and school resource managers to discuss capacity for supporting training needs, whether through leading or facilitating sessions. This feedback is currently being collated.

NC asked if the training that's offered through the learning institute if this is offered elsewhere outside of Nexus MAT?

JT explained that the Trust uses a "train the trainer" model, leveraging staff expertise to lead courses. Some courses, like Paediatric First Aid, are also offered externally, but Nexus incorporates a SEND-specific focus, tailoring training to their unique context.

PB enquired about advanced safeguarding in relation to attendance issues, asking if local area meetings are addressing concerns about children at risk or potentially "falling through the cracks."

CEO responded that all schools work closely with local authority education welfare services on attendance matters. He highlighted that Discovery Academy was recognised last year for its outstanding attendance, receiving an award for having one of the highest attendance rates.

JT provided an update on the new advanced safeguarding forum, which serves as an informational platform. Representatives from other trusts and voluntary organisations come together to share the most current information, which is then communicated back to the trust and filtered through to schools via bulletins.

JT shared that a new sequenced curriculum is available for schools updating theirs, or without a curriculum in place. Schools can use this live resource while personalising their content. Endeavor Academy is currently trialling this for the Trust. Additionally, there's a team working within the Trust to prepare schools for Ofsted inspection. Two members of the central team are serving Ofsted inspectors, and are conducting audits against the inspection framework to identify gaps. They provide support by working with school leaders, subject or middle leaders, and offer practice sessions to reduce the anxiety of the inspection process. Pennine View trialled this approach last year with positive feedback.

RP asked JT to clarify is the sequenced curriculum used as a tool for schools to use when the time is right, its not a case of here's a Nexus curriculum and you need to use it?

JT explained it's a tool to use if they should be in a situation where there isn't a curriculum or the current curriculum isn't adequate.

NC asked if there's a process for negotiations when a school believes it's adequate but the Trust disagrees?

JT clarified that this is managed through "soft intelligence," where central team members meet to share information. A plan is then developed and delivered by the Executive Regional Director for that school.

<p>JT discussed the data report, which was previously incomplete due to missing data from some schools. JT assigned Rebecca Allard, an executive assurance partner, to provide an update for the Standards Committee. The report now includes collated data on school leavers and their destinations. The Trust can track these pupils and their destinations within three months, allowing them to assess whether students are successfully sustaining their post-school placements.</p> <p>RP asked about missing data from schools and whether there's an ambition to capture relevant data for the report?</p> <p>JT responded that the plan is to use the "Next Steps" document as an assessment tool for all schools. This will include data on reading, writing, and maths, starting from early levels up to A-levels. The aim is to assess all students' progress, and where a progression framework is in place, it will be moderated to ensure proper sequencing.</p> <p>RP asked about how staff set expected levels and how the trust moderates them?</p> <p>JT explained that headteachers set ambitious targets at the pupil level, and the trust moderates these through quality assurance processes. Additionally, the trust is currently looking at projected SATs outcomes and using this data to help inform and assess the targets.</p> <p>VM praised the "Next Steps" tool, calling it fabulous, and emphasised the importance of having a common language, particularly in maths. She congratulated the central team for their efforts.</p> <p>JT informed there is likely to be a significant dip in Craggs data outcomes this year compared to last years combined score. The trust is working with the school to raise those outcomes.</p> <p>RP asked what school actions are in place?</p> <p>JT informed the committee that there is a meeting this week to look into this more to see if all school capacity is used to support children to catch up and whether pupil progress meetings are used as effectively as required. There's a tool called Pixel in school and children are regularly tested, it's a bespoke intervention in school. Looking to see if someone at the Ebor Trust, who's currently using Pixel, can review its effectiveness.</p>	
<p>5.1.1 Enterprise Learning Institute Update</p> <p>Document shared prior to meeting for information and discussed under 5.1</p>	
<p>5.1.2. CSIF Data and Progress report</p> <p>Document shared prior to meeting for information and discussed under 5.1</p>	
<p>5.1.3. CSIF Delivery Plan</p> <p>Document shared prior to meeting for information and discussed under 5.1</p>	
<p>5.2. CSIF 2024-25</p> <p>JT discussed the CSIF (Collaborative School Improvement Framework) document, noting that it had been updated to reflect recent research, language changes, and to make</p>	

<p>reference to new boards like the school performance and scrutiny board. The document itself remained largely the same but had undergone some important revisions.</p> <p>NC asked for a show of hands, and the directors unanimously accepted the document.</p>	
<p>5.3 HR Scorecard</p> <p>MS discussed points from the action tracker and provided an update on the HR scorecard, including workforce profile, attendance data, recruitment and retention and the success of the bank staff project in reducing agency spend.</p> <p>MS explained that the process for exit interviews and the plan to work with payroll provider to create more detailed leaver reports, ensuring any significant issues are more systematically reported and addressed.</p> <p>RP asked if the information from staff exit interviews is available centrally?</p> <p>MS confirmed that yes, the information is available centrally. However, HR typically don't receive negative feedback in the exit interviews. The reasons for staff leaving are usually related to moving out of the area, ill health, or leaving for better-paid roles.</p> <p>CEO discussed whether it's worth extracting data and reporting data on leavers or instead better to focus on turnover that gives cause for concern.</p> <p>RP stated she would be very happy with that just assurance that a process is in place and that the CEO is aware of trends. If a hotspot is identified in another area of data directors can ask for specific piece of work.</p> <p>CEO informed of the biannual employee opinion survey and Ofsted inspections in schools also capture staff voice.</p> <p>MS confirmed that everyone is offered an exit interview but not everyone takes it up. This doesn't have to be with their line manager they can choose to come into central and have one with HR member of staff. Training has also recently been rolled out, in the autumn term, to Heads and School Resource Managers on this.</p> <p>MS discussed the scorecard document which was circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: MS to circulate via Governor hub the line chart trends for visual.</p> <p>CEO discussed the discrepancies in the workforce profile figures between Hilltop and Kelford, particularly the number of level 1 – 3 Teaching Assistants and the need to explore this further.</p> <p>ACTION: MS to look with the Regional Directors and Heads at Kelford and Hilltop to explore this imbalance further.</p> <p>RP left the meeting at 18:46</p>	<p>ACTION: MS 31/01/25</p> <p>ACTION: MS 13/05/25</p>
<p>5.4 Summer Term Dashboard</p> <p>Report distributed prior to the meeting for information.</p>	
<p>5.4.1 Academies Intervention Report</p> <p>Report distributed prior to the meeting for information.</p>	
<p>5.5 Risk Register</p>	

Reported for information. No changes proposed or requested.	
5.6 Minutes of the Spring Term Schools' Performance & Scrutiny Board. Report for information.	
6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair None.	
7. CONFIDENTIALITY	
7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting All discussed.	
7.2. To consider any areas of risk discussed in the meeting None.	
8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS	

Tuesday 13 May 2025	5 – 7pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 15 July 2025	5 – 7pm	MS Teams

Minutes approved by Trust Board of Directors

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE