



CHAIR'S SHARES

"Ambition starts at an early age. We learn to walk and want to run; we learn to ride a bike and then want to cycle faster; we learn to read and then want to read more. You soon understand that learning and ambition are closely interlinked.

My first governor position at a large Sheffield secondary in the late 1980s / early 1990s gave me a firm grounding in educational governance. From the beginning my ambition was to do a quality job, to learn as much as possible and get it right. So the Nexus vision of 'Learning together to be the best we can be' really resonates with me.

It is true to say that, for myself and my fellow directors at Nexus, we are constantly learning and working together to ensure Nexus maintains its place as an effective people-focused academy trust.

This learning includes horizon scanning for new developments and initiatives which is achieved by:

reading educational articles in the national and sector press;

identifying education references in manifestos....although there is the potential to be sidelined by the economy, the NHS, post Brexit measures; and

keeping an eye on Ofsted strategy and policy developments following the recent appointment of Sir Martyn Oliver as its new Chief Inspector; his recent references to working together and listening signal a new type of engagement with the education sector.

Although the above goes some way to show that learning is important to us all, a rest is needed from time to time so I do hope you are all able to enjoy a much deserved Easter break."
Best wishes, Andy



IN THIS EDITION:

CHAIR'S SHARES

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE TEAM



CHIEF IN BRIEF

"The Board has appointed two more advisors in the last month, welcoming Phil Bradley and Naomi Cooper to our volunteer governance team. The appointment of advisors is an effective means of Directors ensuring they have a pipeline of prospective new Directors in place, to fill any vacancies that emerge over time."

Warren Carratt – CEO

Governance Underpinnings

Academy Trust Handbook Scheme of Delegation Annual Accounts Governance Statement

For more information on the above visit www.nexusmat.org

DfE releases new Academy Trust Governance Guide

In March 2024 the Department for Education released two new governance guides; one for Maintained Schools and another for Multi Academy Trusts.

The Department has consolidated guidance and made some subtle changes in language to better suit the academy sector context. There are very limited policy changes outlined below and the Department for Education has also withdrawn the following documents:

- Governance Handbook
- Competency Framework for Governance
- Clerking Competency Framework
- Governance Structures and Roles
- Statutory Policies for Schools and Academy Trusts



Department
for Education

The Corporate Governance Team has worked to remove references to these documents in Trust Policies and Procedures.

Governors and Trustees are not required take action as a result of these changes but you may want to familiarise yourself with the new guidance.

The limited policy changes are as follows:

Promote British Values: In Section 1.1.2, the guidance around Trust's 'actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths,' has been changed from should to must.

Cyber Security Training: New to Governance guidance, it is recommended that at least one Trustee should complete cyber security training.

Staff Wellbeing: The new guide sets out these expectations more explicitly with more resources signposted, such as the review recommendations on marking, lesson planning and data management.

Ofsted: How Governance is inspected within MATs



During an inspection, Ofsted inspectors can seek to talk to School leaders, MAT leaders, Directors and Governors about governance arrangements in the school and the wider Trust

The inspection handbook advises inspectors to carefully establish who is responsible for what within a Trust, so they ask the right questions of the right people.

Academy Councils are highly valued bodies that ensure our schools and our Trust hold true to our stated vision and values. They provide a vital platform for community voice to be heard loud and clear, and

help us in our mission to collaboratively improve the life chances of our young people and families.

Within the MAT system, local governance fora has no legal accountability for schools, and within the Nexus MAT Scheme of Delegation, Academy Councils do not have delegated responsibility for budgets or scrutiny. These duties are held by the Trust Board and the CEO, and Ofsted inspectors should understand this structure as they carry out inspections of our schools. This may mean inspectors only ask to interview the Chair of the Board of Directors (or their representative) and the CEO during a school inspection, though the Trust will always seek to involve local governance where the lead inspector agrees.

Introducing your new Corporate Governance Manager...

Adam (mugshot at the bottom of the page) has worked in the education sector for a number of years in a variety of diverse roles and has recently joined us from Wickersley Partnership Trust. Adam gained a range of experience in school and community engagement-focused initiatives and developed a strong passion for effective governance practice through his role as Director's Governance Advisor.

He has led governance strategy and future planning, ensuring alignment with national best practice and ensuring compliance with Department of Education and Education Skills and Funding Agency.

Adam is keen to continue the development of Nexus' approach to governance looking at engagement from governance stakeholders and continuing to foster a culture of transparency through effective publication and dissemination of information within a Trust.

Adam lives in Rotherham with his wife. He is a Manchester United fan, is an avid cinemagoer and can be found most days walking his two dogs somewhere in the South Yorkshire area.



Pupil Cabinet

Pupil Parliament is a direct way of capturing pupil voice and ensuring they can shape the decision making within their schools. Each term representatives from each school's Pupil Parliament are invited to the Trust Pupil Cabinet. This term the Cabinet met on 14th March 2024. As well as discussing local school progress the Cabinet discussed:

Primary and Secondary Trust Olympics: The secondary Olympics will be held on 20th June. The primary Olympics will be held at Abbey School on 25th June.

Other Cross-Trust Events: Willows school organised a successful football event with five Trust schools in attendance. All schools were invited to a Dance event at Abbey on 26th March. A Nexus Choir is being assembled in collaboration with the charity 'Achieve Your Goals'.

Future Planning: The Parliament is considering fundraising efforts and charitable partners.

Staff Parliament

The Staff Parliament convened on 6th March 2024 and discussed:

Teaching Assistant Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme: Applications are now open for the 24/25 Academic Year course– a eight module long programme that gives participants skills linked to teaching and learning. Contact Claire Garbutt on cgarbutt@nexusmat.org who can provide further information if you are interested.

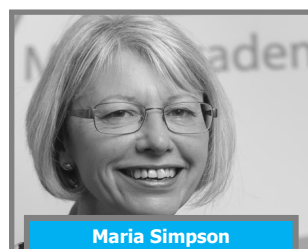
Employee Opinion Survey: The survey responses were overwhelmingly positive. Further work will be conducted to ensure staff are aware of the rewards and wellbeing resources available to them.

Recognition Policy: The Nexus MAT Recognition Policy was assessed by the Parliament. The policy ensures employees who have made an exceptional contribution to the work of the Trust are recognised accordingly by both their academy and the Trust.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE TEAM



Adam Cloney
Corporate Governance Manager



Maria Simpson
Corporate Governance & Policy Officer



Lyndsay Foster
Corporate Governance Clerk



Rebecca Horne
Corporate Governance Clerk



Renata Robin
Corporate Governance Clerk