MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CMAT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD AT THE BERKELEY ACADEMY
ON 25TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Name	Designated Role	Attendance
Amanda Mellor	Vice Chair	Present
Maria Stelmach	Vice Chair	Present
Louise Gohr	CEO	Present
Chris Bell		Present
Ros Caulfield		Present
James Fuller		Apologies
Louise Gibson		Apologies
Jo Morrow		Apologies
Anna Russell		Present
Simon Varo		Apologies
Julie Richardson	CFO	Present
Jenny Whiston	Governance & Compliance Lead	Present
Sue Lambeth	Clerk	Present

PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

	Item
1.	**Welcome, Apologies and Any Other Business** The Clerk welcomed CMAT Trustees to the meeting which was quorate and started at 17.32. Apologies received from James Fuller, Simon Varo, Jo Morrow and Louise Gibson were accepted. Items of Part One business requested: • School catering contracts
2.	**Declarations of Interest** All Declarations of Interest on GVO were up to date. There were no potential pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest between an individual and the trust board as a whole in connection with the business to be discussed during the meeting. Reminders for completion of any outstanding compliance tasks would be issued by Jenny Whiston.

3.	**Election of Chair** The appointment of a Chair of the Chancery Board of Trustees for 2024-25 was currently under discussion.
4.	**Confirmation of Vice Chairs** Amanda Mellor and Maria Stelmach were confirmed as joint Vice Chairs of the Chancery Board of Trustees for 2024-25 as agreed at the Summer 2024 meeting. Maria chaired the meeting from this point.
5.	**Chair's Action** The power to act on behalf of the Chancery Board of Trustees was delegated to the Chair, and in the absence of the Chair, to the Vice Chairs. The Vice Chairs reported no actions since the previous meeting.
6.	**Membership** The membership of the Board was confirmed as shown on this document. Jim Fuller had regrettably submitted his resignation with immediate effect due to increased work commitments. This would result in gaps on the Audit & Risk and the Finance & Resources committees and the Trust Board. Discussion on trustee recruitment ensued, and it was agreed the aim would be to recruit a minimum of three trustees to replace Liz Martindale and Jim with financial skills a priority. In light of potential MAT growth, other expertise such as secondary level, would be a valuable addition. Trustees agreed to forward recommendations to the Governance and Compliance Lead. Greater diversity of board membership would be welcomed. ACTION: To explore new directors with finance, secondary and education expertise. (JW / LG / JR) There were no new appointments since the previous meeting and Anna Russell's term of office was due to expire on 21st March 2025. ACTION: To discuss continuing Trust Board membership with LG. (AR) **Q: Would it be possible for any LGB governors to step up?** A: There is a need to ensure no vulnerability at LGB level. This has been discussed with the Central Team and further discussions could take place. The 2024-25 committee structure was as follows: • Audit & Risk – Amanda Mellor (Chair), Anna Russell and Chris Bell. • Finance & Resources – Amanda Mellor, Juan Zhou and Simon Varo. • Standards – Louise Gibson (Chair), Ros Caulfield and Maria Stelmach.

	Link trustees for 2024-25 were agreed as: • SEND – Louise Gibson • Pupil Premium – Ros Caulfield • Safeguarding – Anna Russell • H&S – Chris Bell LGB links were confirmed to be as per the document attached to the meeting: • Elworth Hall School – Maria Stelmach • Excalibur School – Simon Varo and Amanda Mellor • Pikemere School – Chris Bell • The Berkeley Academy – Jo Morrow • Willaston Academy – Lou Gibson The CEO PM Panel would comprise Ros Caulfield, Anna Russell and Gill Barker (LGB Chair, The Berkeley Academy). Confirmation was received that membership recorded on GIAS, Chancery Trust website and the NGA would be updated by Jenny Whiston.
7.	**CEO Report to Trustees – Part One** Headline data had not yet been presented to the Standards Committee which was scheduled to meet on 14th November. Headlines Headteachers (HTs) had met at the end of July to discuss summer term data. All schools were achieving national figures or slightly above. Schools in CMAT were better than average schools and should not be measured against national figures. Based on their demographic they should be achieving higher. Aspirations for leaders and learners in all schools should be above national and based on Fischer Family Trust (FFT) 20 or FFT50 targets. In July HTs had examined key themes of data across the trust and had identified common themes for inclusion in the Trust Development Plan (to be supported by the individual School Development Plans), namely: • Raising Attainment for Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY) had been a successful learning process with a small number of pupils across schools targeted. Implementation would be the core purpose of the work in the current year to ensure equity in teaching and pupils meeting their individual high aspirations and standards. • Work with the local authority to obtain funding for the growing need of SEND pupils continued to be difficult with much outside the control of the trust. A large amount of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) had been provided last year, which this year this would be consolidated into common good practice. • More able pupils. The number of pupils achieving the Greater Depth Standard (GDS) was lower than national figures in writing. Reasons why pupils were not reaching greater depth in writing, although agreed

	to be a high standard to achieve, were to be explored. GDS children needed to be challenged to reach their FFT potential in Maths and reading. Key Changes since the summer meeting All school categorisation visits took place in the summer and external support had been commissioned for the current year in light of the CEO's Headteacher responsibilities at The Berkeley Academy. Trustees were assured of the correct balance for the schools which ensured that each school received the same but differently. A fresh pair of eyes would be helpful for the schools. External support would carry out school improvement visits, and Jonathon Riley's English visits would continue with a focus on writing. All external personnel would feed into Team around the School meetings to ensure correct support was in place. LG had offered school improvement support to Willaston Academy due to the change in leadership as the Deputy Head had assumed the acting Headteacher role. This would provide continuity. Further key changes were for discussion under Part 2 of the meeting.
8.	**MAT Development Plan** Following their meeting in July to produce a draft document, Heads had met again on 20th September to discuss Priority One: development of the leadership capacity of Chancery MAT, to enable CMAT to become self-sustaining. The aim was for leaders to play a greater role in trust activity and as a result each Head now had a strand of the Trust Development Plan to lead. Anthony Hughes (Pikemere) was leading on RADY, Louise Gohr (The Berkeley) leading on SEND, Elworth and Willaston were working on Computing and Juliet Jones was leading on more able pupils with a focus on more able pupils in writing. Each Head would facilitate the meetings of staff groups. Trust, rather than school, milestones in each area had been established and each Heads' meeting would receive feedback on progress. Trustees welcomed the new strategy and the breadth of senior leaders taking on areas of the Trust Development Plan. Priority 1 – Developing senior leaders The aim would be to avoid any schools becoming vulnerable e.g. the recent appointment of new senior staff. Successful induction would be essential. Priority 2 – SEND, RADY, Computing and more able pupils As discussed above Priority 3 – Consideration of the future of CMAT

	JW, JR and LG would continue to plan for the next phase of growth of the trust. Whilst the trust was in a strong position as a group of 5 schools, nevertheless decisions on achieving growth were required. **Q: How will the leaders' trust-wide activity be managed and assessed?** A: Helen Gorst, Fallibroome Multi Academy Trust Deputy CEO, will be carrying out performance management for all Heads who are all keen to see their strand incorporated into the Performance Management (PMR) process. Following the agreement of the Estates Strategy during the previous year, the trust advisers, E3Cube, had recommended slight changes in wording. **Trustees agreed the amended Estates Strategy.**
9.	**Finance Matters** Latest management accounts and confirmation of monthly receipt The July management accounts had been received and the August accounts were still in preparation. The new accountants had been particularly supportive with the Year End procedures and would be in school for two weeks from 30th September. Katy Jodrell, FMAT, continued to provide support. Trust insurance continued to be provided by RPA. Teacher Pay Scales were not yet fully approved. Nevertheless, the trust was working on a 5.5% increase which would be paid to staff once finalised. The Academy Trust Handbook was accepted. The Accounting Officer had received a letter outlining the changes in the Academy Trust Handbook in July 2024 and a letter to academies and colleges on 11th September to advise of the move of the Education and Skills Finding Authority (ESFA) to the Department for Education (DfE).
10.	**Board Reports** Final report from Mark Bayley Trustees agreed the report reflected the verbal feedback given at the Summer 2024 Directors' meeting and there were no additional risks or areas for discussion to consider. The Standards Committee was scheduled to meet on Thursday 14th November 2024. Trustees with any outstanding mandatory training would be alerted after this meeting either by email or a task on GVO. The Acting Chair pointed out the risk of vulnerability of untrained Trustees. The board should aim to be as

	compliant and up to date as possible. Trustees were thanked for their work in completing the tasks.
11.	**Board impact** • The greater involvement of Heads made each of the CMAT schools feel part of the trust greater family. The change of approach would have a positive effect on cohesion and staff morale and could only be to the benefit to pupils. • Mark Bayley's report had confirmed the board self-evaluation was accurate, and that the board knew what worked well and what needed improvement.
12.	**Local Governance** The first LGB meetings of the term had begun week commencing 16th September and Link Trustees would provide reports for the November CMAT Trustees' meeting. The meeting discussed the appropriateness of providing data to allow LGBs to compare individual school performance across the trust. It was agreed that as Heads had open discussions with each other, it was more important for LGBs to compare their school's performance against FFT data rather than other schools. Should LGBs be interested, considerable comparative data was in the public domain. There had been no new LGB appointments since the Summer 2024 Trust Board meeting on 10th July.
13.	**Policies** The following Trust policies had been reviewed and approved on GVO: • **Safeguarding Statement** • **Health & Safety Policy** (including one minor change) • **Dealing with incidents of unreasonable behaviour towards staff** (see the Union Charter for information) (a small number of changes in light of JNC meeting with unions and the incorporation of the Charter). • **Central Team Pay Policy** (no changes) • **Staff Wellbeing Policy** (now included reference to senior mental health leads in post and the DfE Staff Wellbeing Charter which all schools have signed up to) • **Whistleblowing Policy** (including one minor change based on school safeguarding audit recommendations). The **Menopause Policy** (approved by the Central Team) was ratified. AR offered support with training around the content of the Menopause Policy if required.

	ACTION: To explore training around menopause. (JW) **Trustees agreed to extend the review period to the Financial Procedures Manual which had been reviewed in light of the 2024 Academy Trust Handbook**
14.	**Cheshire East Director of Children's Services Report** The report was not available at the time of this meeting.
15.	**Minutes of the previous meetings / matters arising and actions** The meeting confirmed that the Part One minutes of the meeting on 10th July 2024 on GVO were an accurate account and had been approved. There were no matters arising. The GVO report on actions from the previous meeting was reviewed and the following points highlighted: • The recruitment of trustees had been discussed. • A crib sheet for LGB reports from link trustees was on GVO. Link trustees were only required to attend Part1 of LGB meetings unless specifically requested to say. • The union action had been completed.
16.	**Any Other Business** <u>School catering contracts</u> Cheshire East (CE) catering contracts were to cease from January 2025. In response 37 CE schools had formed a consortium and were being guided by Ray Jeffrey, a Chancery Member, and a procurement process was ongoing. Trustee approval could be required. It was understood the equipment in schools, although belonging to CE, would be donated to the schools. Trustees requested that, if replacing any kitchen equipment, a move to electricity be considered form an emissions perspective". Trustees were assured that the change would have no impact on Free School Meals as schools were currently subsidising their provision. The prospect of the provision of breakfast for all pupils from 2026 was discussed, and Trustees were alerted to the potential loss of income as this was currently a charged item. Volunteer schools for a pilot programme had been requested. **Q: Will there be continuity of school meals?** A: Yes, staff will be TUPE'd over.
17.	**Date of Next meeting** The date of the next meeting of the Chancery Trust Directors was confirmed as 27th November 2024.

Part One of the meeting finished at 18.34.