



BEAUMONT SCHOOL (Company number 8104190)
Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday 9 July 2025 at 6.30pm
Beaumont School – Conference Room (A7)

Trustees Present:

Ian Johnson (IJo), Chair, Martin Atkinson (MAAt), Michele Lloyd (MLI), Gill Shearsby-Fox (GSh), Liz Spooner (LSp), Taane Clark (TCI) and Ian Winter (IWi). David Lee (DLe), Dominic Sedghi (DSe) Ekaterina Sjostrand (ESj) and Matt Maltz (MMa) via Google Meet.

In attendance:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Jonathan Mountstevens (JMo) | Deputy Headteacher |
| Yvonne Powdrell (YPo) | Deputy Headteacher |
| Rachel Stringer (RSt) | Clerk to the Board of Trustees |

Actions Agreed at the meeting:

| | Action | Responsibility | Timescale |
|---|---|----------------|------------------|
| 1 | To amend the Trustee workplan to reflect the new approach to departmental reviews | RSt/JMo | CTL 1, Oct 2025 |
| 2 | To c/f the Behaviour policy | RSt/YPo | BOT 1, Sept 2025 |
| 3 | To investigate a potential policy on school food | RSt | BOT 1, Sept 2025 |
| 4 | To share the link to the government ID verification portal for UK Directors | RSt | ASAP |
| 5 | Check that Trustees have undertaken the ID verification | RSt | BOT 1, Sept 2025 |

A. General

1. Welcome and reminder of Trustee duty to confidentiality

IJo welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them of their duty to confidentiality.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from April Cowen. The meeting was quorate.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of BOT for the academic year 2025-6.

IJo and DLe confirmed that they were happy to continue as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Trustees are grateful and thanked them for their continued service.

4. Declaration of any conflict of interest foreseen in relation to agenda items and an undertaking to declare any that arises in the course of the meeting

Trustees were reminded that anyone with a conflict of interest must declare it, withdraw from the meeting and take no part in any discussion or decision on the matter. None were declared.

5. To receive notification of any other business for item 22

One notification had been received and was listed on the updated agenda.

6. Approval of the minutes of 20 May 2025 and matters arising

The minutes were approved. There were no action points.

B. Reports and Updates

7. Safeguarding update

The HFL Safeguarding review report (April 2025) was distributed in advance of the meeting. Dlr reminded Trustees that the only outstanding action from the Safeguarding Action Plan was to share this report. She is very pleased with it, highlighting that we have been graded at level 5 (“substantial evidence with positive indicators”) in almost all areas.

The sole area graded at 4 (“reasonable evidence with areas for development”) is ‘Reporting and Recording.’ She has reviewed the areas for development with MAt and many of the actions have already been completed. The DSLs had identified that they wanted to work on written records prior to the review. They have now agreed a way forward and this will include recording the DSL follow up and rationale. Staff training will be scheduled. Dlr informed Trustees that the DSL team will begin to use the audit function on CPOMs from September and this will enable them to undertake a spot check on reports. Trustees recognise that only a minor tweak is needed to move this area to a 5 and that Dlr and GSh can internally audit this.

GSh asked whether Trustees could do safeguarding quizzes, in a similar fashion to the staff safeguarding ones? She said that this would be an effective way of continuing to ensure that Trustees stay on top of all safeguarding matters. Dlr replied that this can be included in the Safeguarding Action Plan for the new academic year.

Dlr left the meeting.

8. Updates from Committees:

- a) **Resources** - the minutes of the meeting on 18 June 2025 had been distributed in advance. DLe explained that the primary item of the meeting was the budget which will be discussed in item 10.
- b) **CTL** - the minutes of the meeting on 10 June 2025 had also been distributed in advance. There were no questions.

9. Acknowledgement of receipt and review of the Management Accounts

The management accounts for period 9 had been made available in advance of the meeting. There were no questions.

10. To approve the budget for 2025-6

The following documents had been shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting:

- the budget forecast summary
- budget notes for Trustees
- the [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) financial benchmarking and insights tool - deployment plan

MAt said that the budget looks better than we had envisaged, albeit the position is still very tight. Forecasting remains challenging because we never know precisely what we will receive in government funding. However, we have taken on board the long term picture and, as previously discussed, will investigate alternative timetable models. Other schools operate successfully with these and they would save money over the longer term, however, we also need to be aware of the downsides. He wants to discuss this with the LT and then bring it to BOT. DLe added that the budget is a little bit better than expected but any change in circumstances could push it into deficit. The school cannot grow any more; therefore it is sensible to think about alternative plans.

MAt added that one of his key concerns is the national funding formula. Hertfordshire have not yet fully adopted this but they will have within the next two years. This will negatively impact all Hertfordshire secondary schools. He hopes that any shortfalls could be addressed through natural wastage.

Trustees approved the budget for 2025-6.

11. Chair's Update

The meeting schedule for 2025-6 and the Trustee annual work plan were distributed in advance of the meeting. There were no questions.

12. Headteacher's Update

MAt gave the following verbal update:

- We are fully staffed, in terms of teaching, for September. He also outlined a number of internal moves that have taken place.
- School Rebuilding Programme (SRP) - the client engagement meetings begin tomorrow, with two contractors presenting. There are further meetings scheduled for later this month. How do you select the contractor? MAt replied that we will have a voice, as will the DFE. Have the contractors worked on other local schools? Yes, Helen Purple, School Business Manager, and Jim Crompton, Facilities Manager, went to visit Pinewood School to look at their temporary buildings - which were excellent. Trustees want to be clear on the criteria used to select the contractor so we can positively influence the decision.
- The Y7 intake for September is currently at 241. We expect to have the largest ever sixth form. This will mean some big A level class sizes - most notably in Psychology and Chemistry. We will have to be firm on the entry criteria which may impact some internal candidates. Which schools are the external candidates from? They are from multiple schools but we have received a significant number of applications from Bishops Hatfield and Samuel Ryder.

13. To discuss the future of departmental reviews

A report outlining departmental review plans, discussed at CTL 5, was shared in advance of the meeting. It proposes a move away from a model of department reviews as events, to a continuous cycle of department review. JMo explained that the new LT structure will establish two discrete teams and the curriculum team will line manage the departments. He wants to maintain Trustee departmental scrutiny so is keen to receive feedback on the proposal.

LSp explained that this impacts all Trustees because everyone has a departmental link area. Trustees would need to come in annually for a student voice, as opposed to every two years. They will receive more documentation, including Departmental Improvement Plans.

Trustees agree that now is a good time to make a change and it would be beneficial to review departments in a different way. They asked: what does this look like in terms of the Trustee workplan? JMo will think about what is presented to CTL, as they will no longer receive departmental review reports. He is going to draft a template document and hopes that this will help Trustees think about what sort of questions they want to ask. He added that the senior leaders with curricular responsibilities will meet fortnightly and will be very focussed; they will also consider what they want Trustee involvement to look like.

Trustees asked: have teachers and pupils been consulted on this? JMo replied that the Heads of Department (HOD) have received his proposal and have not raised any concerns. There is less work for the HODs in this proposal, as they will not have direct involvement in departmental reviews. There is nothing of concern for individual teachers. Students have not been involved in the discussions as it is only ever a small group of students who are selected for the student voice.

A Trustee said that they found the departmental review reports useful and would prefer to continue to receive these at CTL. However, other Trustees were of the view that CTL will receive more information and hear more from the students under the new proposal. They noted that sometimes departmental review reports are received months after the review has taken place and the new system will be much more real time. The Trustee with concerns felt reassured after hearing this.

14. To approve the Plan for School Improvement for 2025/6

The proposed PSI was shared in advance of the meeting. MAt outlined the 6 key priorities:

- Priority 1, Supporting Learners, is a continuation of the priority from 24/25.
- Priority 2, KS5 outcomes. JMo said that we perform very strongly at KS5 (88th percentile nationally) but we could be even better. A key area of focus will be independent study. Will there be a departmental review for the sixth form? JMo said that some departmental reviews are purely sixth form based and the sixth form does a lot of student voice.
- Priority 3, Engagement. YPo said that behaviour is very good because of all the work we have done. Now we are asking ourselves how we can engage students even more.
- Priority 4 - 1:1 devices. There has been one key change since this was presented at CTL last month. This will now be rolled out to Y7 from September 2026, but not Y8 as well. This change was to respond to concerns that Y8 parents are likely to have already purchased a device for their children.
- Priority 5 - is the financial priority and we have already discussed the investigative work that is going to take place.
- Priority 6 - is the SRP. MAt highlighted that some of the dates may change and therefore some of the success criteria may need to be tweaked. It was noted that having targets in this document may prove useful if the project is slipping.

Trustees approved the PSI for 2025/6.

15. To receive an update on a review of the Single Central Record

IWi had met with Sarah Mayhew, Head of HR. He referred Trustees to the section of the HFL Safeguarding review report which addresses the review of the Single Central Record.

16. To receive feedback from a review of the complaints file

MLI said that since her last review in December 2024, 32 complaints had been received. 25 of these were from parents/carers. The proportion received from local residents has reduced. She reported that the school responded thoroughly to parental complaints and demonstrated that it is open to taking on suggestions. Of the 25 parental complaints, there are 3 that are ongoing.

17. To receive the Kirkland Rowell parent survey March 2025

The survey was shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting, along with a summary document.

Trustees asked: will we still want to pay for this next year? Is it still useful as a source of externally validated data? MAt wants to check how many other local schools use it. Are there any differences between this and the parent Ofsted survey? JMo was interested in the feedback on home learning. Trustees noted that students complete a survey each year as part of the tutor review day. We receive good data from this and it is now an annual item on the Trustee workplan.

C. Policies and Trustee Development

18. Policies due for review at the meeting. Consideration and approval of the following policies (bearing in mind the responsibility to carry out an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010)

Trustees agreed with the proposal to discontinue the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination procedure, noting that it has been superseded by the Bullying and Harassment policy introduced in November 2024.

They approved the minor tweaks to the Student Use of Mobile phones policy. In his role as the Chair of STASSH, MAt informed Trustees that local primary schools are really pushing an anti smart phone message. He is broadly supportive of this but doesn't want to have to police it. He added that St George's and Sandringam are looking to introduce an outright ban on smartphones by year group. Trustees asked: what are the specific details? MAt replied that practically this isn't different from what we do already, apart from the vocal support. He is of the view that if we were to adopt a similar position this could create a lot of complaints and work. It could only be done for new students.

19. To receive the Trustee training record

An updated Trustee training record had been distributed in advance of the meeting. There were no questions.

20. To receive notification of DFE updates to the Academy Trust handbook, the Academy Trust governance guide and the Financial support and oversight for academy trusts guidance

RSt has shared the financial support and oversight for academy trusts guidance (published June 2025) with the Resources committee. RSt drew Trustees attention to the recommendation in the Governance Guide for Academy Trusts to undertake an external review of governance every three years and to have a policy on school food.

21. Update re Trustee visits to School

- 16 June, DSe, link PSHEE visit
- 27 June, MLI, to review the complaints file
- 1 July, IWi, to review the Single Central Record

22. To receive any other business as notified in item 5

The following item was received from DSe: update on identity verification for UK Directors - Companies House

DSe reminded Trustees that the law is changing. From the autumn, all UK company Directors must undergo mandatory identity verification. He has completed it. DSe will send RSt the link to the government ID verification portal and she will circulate to Trustees. She will chase Trustees about this at the start of the new academic year.

23. Dates of next meeting(s)/events:

As agreed in item 11.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 20.20.

Signed:
Chair of Committee



Dated:
10/09/25