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Minutes of the Omnia Learning Trust Board of Directors

Held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 19th May 2026, 13:00–15:00

Invitees and Attendance

Name / Role	Position	Attendance
Russ Massie	Director / Chair	Present
Jason Murphy	Director / Vice Chair	Present
Jodie Croft	CEO / Director	Present
Alison Hill	Director	Present
Duncan Millard	Director	Present (Remote)
Tyler Jeffs	Director	Present (Remote)
Nicola Poole	Director	Present
Jenelle Ross-McIntyre	Director	Present (Remote – Joined Late)
Leah Basilone	Deputy CEO	Present
Sarah Bellingham	Head of Operations	Present
Hana Hamilton	Governance & Communications Officer (Clerk)	Present
Sam Reilly	EduFin Accountant	Present (Remote for Item 12 only)

Disclaimer – Microsoft Teams Meeting Transcript
This meeting was held via Microsoft Teams. The automatic transcription function was enabled solely to assist in the accurate production of draft minutes. The transcript is ***not*** *the formal record of proceedings. Approved minutes, once confirmed by the Board, constitute the only official record. Transcripts are stored securely and deleted following formal approval of the minutes. By attending, participants acknowledged and consented to the use of transcription for governance purposes.*

1. Welcome, Apologies and Approval of Transcript

Introduced by: Chair

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

It was noted that Tyler Jeffs and Duncan Millard attended remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Jenelle Ross-McIntyre joined remotely later during the meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that Microsoft Teams transcription had been activated to support the production of the minutes.
The Board reviewed and accepted the use of the Teams transcript for minute drafting purposes.

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✅ **APPROVED:** Use of Microsoft Teams transcription for this meeting.
☐ **ACTION:** None required.

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2. Declaration of any Conflicts of Interest

Introduced by: Chair

The Chair invited Directors to declare any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items, pecuniary interests, business interests, or hospitality received since the previous meeting. No new conflicts of interest were declared.

The Board noted that the Register of Business Interests had been reviewed and updated in March 2026 and remained current.

Directors confirmed that no agenda item created a conflict requiring withdrawal from discussion or decision-making.

✅ **APPROVED:** Register of Business Interests reviewed and conflicts position noted
☐ **ACTION:** None

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3. Identify AOB and/or Confidential AOB

Introduced by: Chair

The Chair invited Directors to identify any items for AOB or confidential AOB.

None declared.

✅ **APPROVED:** N/A
☐ **ACTION:** None

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4. Review of Trust Board Membership and DBS / s128 Checks

Introduced by: Chair

The Board received assurance that:
- DBS compliance remained up to date;
- Section 128 checks were complete;
- safer recruitment requirements were being met;
- safeguarding governance records remained compliant.

No concerns were raised.

✅ **APPROVED:** Confirmed as compliant
☐ **ACTION:** N/A

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5. Review Directors' Training Requirements for 2025–2026

Introduced by: Chair

The Board reviewed Director training compliance and continuing professional development requirements for 2025–2026.

The Clerk presented an overview of completed and outstanding training requirements.
It was reported that:

- the majority of Directors had completed mandatory safeguarding training requirements;
- completion rates for governance CPD had improved significantly;
- several Directors had undertaken substantial additional training linked to exclusion panels and pupil discipline hearings;
- equality, diversity, unconscious bias and GDPR training requirements had now been formalised across the Trust.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought clarification regarding whether newly introduced training requirements would be retrospectively monitored.

Response / Assurance Provided:
It was confirmed that the new requirements had only recently been established and therefore would not be treated as overdue. Directors would be given sufficient time to complete the modules before year-end reporting.

The Board agreed that maintaining a strong training culture remained an important component of effective governance.

✅ **APPROVED:** Director training compliance position received and noted.
☐ **ACTION:** Directors to complete outstanding mandatory and CPD requirements by 30 June 2026.

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6. Approval of Minutes of Previous Board Meeting and Matters Arising

Report introduced by: Chair

The minutes of the Board meeting held on **17 March 2026** were presented for approval.

Directors confirmed that they had reviewed the minutes in advance of the meeting.

The Board reviewed progress against actions arising from the previous meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that the majority of actions had been completed, with remaining actions either in progress or incorporated into substantive agenda items for consideration during the meeting.
The CEO reported that wider sector discussions were increasingly considering whether governance records should move towards more concise action logs, risk registers and assurance reporting, rather than detailed narrative minutes. The Board noted that this

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remained an area of national discussion and that no changes were currently proposed to Omnia's governance approach.

Directors agreed that the current level of detail continued to provide a strong audit trail and effective evidence of governance challenge and assurance.

✅ **APPROVED:** Minutes of the Board meeting held on **17 March 2026** approved as an accurate record.
☐ **ACTION:** Upload the approved minutes to OLT website and to Governor Hub.

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7. Receipt of Previous QES Committee Minutes and Chair's Update

Report introduced by: QES Committee Chair

The Board received the April 2026 Quality of Education and Safeguarding (QES) Committee minutes together with a verbal update from the Committee Chair.

The Chair of QES reported that the overall position across Trust schools remained positive, with strong educational performance, improving attendance and effective governance oversight evident across all schools.

The Board heard that whilst educational outcomes remained strong, a consistent theme emerging across all schools was the increasing complexity of safeguarding, SEND and wider social care needs. Directors were advised that schools were managing increasingly high levels of vulnerability, behavioural complexity and external agency involvement, often without corresponding increases in funding.

The Committee Chair reported that these pressures were placing growing demands upon school leadership teams, safeguarding leads and wider staff capacity.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether the increasing complexity of pupil need represented an isolated issue within individual schools or a Trust-wide trend.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Board was advised that the position was consistent across all four schools. Increasing levels of SEND, safeguarding referrals, family support requirements and social care involvement were being experienced throughout the Trust. Whilst leadership teams continued to manage these challenges effectively, funding arrangements had not kept pace with the level of need being experienced by schools.

The Deputy CEO confirmed that the same themes had emerged through all QES Committee meetings and school reviews. Particular pressures included:
- increasing safeguarding caseloads;
- greater complexity of pupil need;
- rising social care involvement;
- increased demand for SEND support;
- growing expectations on schools to provide wider family support services.

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The Board recognised that these pressures reflected wider national challenges facing the education sector.

The Chair of QES further reported that governor and trustee engagement within local governance structures remained particularly strong. Parent Governors, Staff Governors and Committee Members continued to provide effective challenge and support, contributing positively to governance effectiveness across the Trust.
Directors noted that the committee reporting structure had matured significantly and now provided clear assurance regarding educational performance, safeguarding and school improvement priorities.

The Board agreed that the QES Committee continued to provide robust scrutiny and effective oversight of its delegated responsibilities.

✅ **APPROVED:** Receipt of April 2026 QES Committee minutes and verbal update noted.
☐ **ACTION:** Continue monitoring safeguarding, SEND and leadership capacity pressures through QES and Board reporting arrangements.

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8. Receive Principals' Termly Dashboards Covering Demographics, Fire Drills, Exclusions, Absence, Racist & Bullying Incidents, Safeguarding, Child Protection, Complaints, CPD and Staffing Update

Report introduced by: Deputy CEO

The Board received the termly dashboards for all four schools.
The Deputy CEO advised that the dashboards had been circulated in advance and formed part of the Trust's regular performance monitoring arrangements. Directors were invited to receive the dashboards for assurance purposes, with more detailed discussion taking place within the CEO and DCEO reports later in the meeting.

The Board noted that the dashboards provided oversight of:
- pupil demographics;
- attendance;
- exclusions;
- safeguarding activity;
- child protection;
- staffing;
- complaints;
- incidents of racism and bullying;
- CPD;
- statutory compliance measures.

Directors confirmed that they had reviewed the dashboards prior to the meeting.
No specific concerns were raised at this stage.
The Board agreed that the dashboards continued to provide an effective high-level overview of school performance and operational indicators.

✅ **APPROVED:** Principals' Dashboards received and noted.
☐ **ACTION:** None.

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9. Receipt of April Operations Committee Minutes with Chair Verbal Update

Report introduced by: Operations Committee Chair

The Chair of the Operations Committee presented a verbal summary of the Committee meeting held on 21 April 2026.

The Board heard that the meeting had been particularly positive and had proceeded efficiently, reflecting the maturity of systems and controls now established across the Trust.

The Committee had reviewed:

- financial performance;
- estates matters;
- compliance activity;
- policy reviews;
- staffing matters;
- budget monitoring.

The Operations Committee Chair reported that no significant concerns had emerged requiring escalation to the Board.
Financial performance remained broadly in line with expectations, although continued monitoring was required in relation to SEND-related expenditure and future pupil number projections.

The Board was advised that:

- policy reviews had been completed;
- routine compliance matters had been scrutinised;
- estates management remained stable;
- budget monitoring continued to identify emerging pressures early.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought assurance that there were no significant financial or operational risks requiring immediate Board intervention.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Operations Committee Chair confirmed no issue currently presented a material risk requiring urgent Board action.

✅ **APPROVED:** April 2026 Operations Committee minutes and verbal update received.
☐ **ACTION:** None.

10. Receive OLT Compliance Report

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Report introduced by: Head of Operations

The Head of Operations presented the Trust Compliance Report and advised that the report had previously been scrutinised by the Operations Committee.

The Board reviewed the Trust's compliance position across:
- GDPR;
- IT systems;
- internal audit activity;
- financial compliance;
- safeguarding;
- estates;
- health and safety;
- HR compliance;
- staff absence;
- policy management.

The Board noted that the majority of compliance areas continued to be rated green.

Internal Audit
The Head of Operations confirmed that the Trust's spring internal audit had been completed and had resulted in a positive outcome.
The Board was advised that:
- the spring audit had provided strong assurance;
- recommendations were limited and manageable;
- compliance controls remained effective.

A further summer internal audit was currently underway focusing on estates management and related compliance arrangements.

Budget Setting and Monitoring
The Board noted several amber ratings linked to the budget-setting process and financial monitoring cycle.
It was confirmed that these reflected timing considerations rather than concerns regarding compliance or financial control.

Staff Absence
The Board reviewed comparative absence data.
The Head of Operations reported that sickness absence levels remained below the previous year's position.
At the time of reporting:
- sickness absence stood at approximately 537 days compared with 792 days during the previous reporting year;
- the Trust continued to monitor attendance carefully as the summer term progressed.

The Board welcomed the improvement and noted the positive impact on operational stability.

Health and Safety
The Board received an update regarding recent fire safety activity.
The Head of Operations advised that Sires Hill Primary Academy had recently undergone its annual external fire risk assessment.

Response / Assurance Provided:

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The assessment had identified a number of new actions, none of which were considered significant.
The Board heard that:

- actions had already been incorporated into the school improvement programme;
- additional site support had been provided through Trust caretaking resources;
- work was progressing appropriately.

Directors received assurance that health and safety compliance remained robust.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought confirmation that staffing changes within estates functions would not affect completion of the identified fire safety actions.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Board was advised that additional caretaking capacity had been deployed to support the school and that all identified actions remained achievable within planned timescales.
The overall compliance position remained strong.

✅ **APPROVED:** Compliance Report received and noted.
☐ **ACTION:** Oversight of completion of actions arising from the Sires Hill annual fire risk assessment and report progress through Operations Committee monitoring.

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11. Receive CEO Report: (1) RAG Report DCEO Update (2) RAG Report CEO Update

Report introduced by: CEO and DCEO

The CEO and Deputy CEO presented the Trust-wide school performance, risk and development reports. The Board received updates covering educational performance, leadership and management, attendance, safeguarding, SEND, Trust growth, pupil projections, strategic development priorities and the Trust Risk Register.
The Board noted that the overall position across the Trust remained strong, with all schools continuing to benefit from collaborative leadership, shared systems and central Trust support. Directors were advised that whilst educational outcomes remained positive, increasing complexity of pupil need, SEND demand and safeguarding activity continued to create operational challenges across all schools.
The Board reviewed the Trust Risk Register alongside the CEO and DCEO reports and considered whether current risk ratings remained appropriate.

11.1 Trust-Wide Position
The CEO reported that the Trust continued to perform strongly against its strategic objectives and that outcomes across Omnia schools remained above national averages in several key measures.
Directors noted that Trust growth remained on track, with Valley Park Academy progressing well towards opening and continued positive engagement with the Department for Education.
The Board further noted that the Trust remained highly ranked nationally when benchmarked against other multi-academy trusts and that this reflected the sustained quality of education being delivered across all schools.

Director Question / Challenge:

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Directors questioned whether the increasing level of complexity within schools was beginning to outweigh the benefits associated with pupil numbers and Trust growth.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO acknowledged that pupil complexity had increased significantly over recent years. Whilst pupil numbers remained important for financial sustainability, schools were increasingly supporting pupils with complex SEND, SEMH and safeguarding needs without corresponding increases in funding. The Trust continued to review staffing structures and support arrangements to ensure schools remained able to meet these challenges effectively.

11.2 Sires Hill Primary Academy – Ofsted Inspection Outcome
The Board received a detailed update regarding the recent Ofsted inspection at Sires Hill Primary Academy.

The CEO advised that the inspection outcome had recognised the significant strengths of the school and had provided exceptionally positive feedback regarding leadership, culture, curriculum and pupil experience.

The Board heard that inspectors had recognised the remarkable progress achieved since the school's opening and had acknowledged the high-quality provision established within a relatively short period.

The Board formally recognised the exceptional achievements of Sires Hill Primary Academy and congratulated leaders, staff and pupils on the inspection outcome.

11.3 Trust Risk Register Review
The Board reviewed the Trust Risk Register in conjunction with the CEO and DCEO reports and considered whether existing risk ratings remained appropriate in light of current operational and strategic developments.
The CEO highlighted several areas that continued to require close monitoring, including:

- increasing SEND complexity and associated funding pressures;
- leadership capacity across growing schools;
- safeguarding demand;
- workforce recruitment and retention;
- pupil number projections;
- implementation of anticipated national SEND reforms;
- financial sustainability in the context of rising staffing and operational costs.

The Board noted that these risks had been regularly reviewed through both the QES and Operations Committees and that mitigation actions remained active.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether any risk currently required escalation beyond its existing rating.

Response / Assurance Provided:

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The CEO advised that whilst several risks remained under close scrutiny, no new strategic risks had emerged requiring immediate escalation. Existing mitigations were considered appropriate and effective, although SEND and safeguarding pressures continued to require ongoing monitoring.

The Board agreed that the Risk Register remained an accurate reflection of the Trust's current position.

11.4 School Performance and Leadership Updates
Didcot Primary Academy

The Deputy CEO reported that Didcot continued to demonstrate strong performance across key areas.
The Board was advised that:

- leadership remained stable and effective;
- attendance remained strong;
- educational outcomes continued to be positive;
- safeguarding arrangements remained robust;
- staffing remained settled.

Directors noted the continued strength of the school and the effectiveness of leadership systems.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought assurance that strong performance was being sustained whilst avoiding complacency.
Response / Assurance Provided:
The Deputy CEO confirmed that regular monitoring, challenge and quality assurance processes remained in place. School leaders continued to focus on continuous improvement and curriculum development despite the school's strong position.
The Board welcomed the continued positive performance.

Wantage Primary Academy
The Board received an update regarding Wantage Primary Academy.
The Deputy CEO reported that attendance continued to improve and that operational systems had become increasingly embedded.
The Board heard that:

- leadership coaching and support had continued;
- SEND provision remained an area of focus;
- pastoral systems remained effective;
- attendance had moved closer to national expectations.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether increasing SEND complexity was affecting the school's ability to sustain recent improvements.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Deputy CEO advised that whilst SEND pressures continued to increase, systems were now stronger and leaders had a clearer understanding of where support needed to be targeted. The school remained on a positive trajectory.

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The Board noted the progress made since previous reporting cycles.

Twickenham Primary Academy
The Board received a detailed update regarding Twickenham Primary Academy.
The CEO advised that substantial work had continued throughout the year to strengthen leadership, behaviour systems and operational consistency.
The Board heard that:

- improvement activity remained ongoing;
- expectations regarding conduct and accountability had been strengthened;
- leadership oversight remained intensive;
- support and challenge arrangements continued to be in place.

A detailed discussion took place regarding behaviour and culture across the school.

Valley Park Academy

The CEO provided an update regarding Valley Park Academy and the progress towards opening.
The Board was advised that:

- consultation activity had been completed successfully;
- community engagement had been positive;
- pupil applications continued to be received;
- project milestones remained on track;
- engagement with the Department for Education remained constructive.

The Board heard that preparations for opening continued to progress well and that significant work had been undertaken by leaders and central Trust staff to ensure readiness.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought assurance that staffing, admissions and operational planning remained aligned with projected pupil numbers.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO confirmed that planning assumptions continued to be reviewed regularly and that operational arrangements remained proportionate to anticipated demand. Flexibility had been built into planning to allow for adjustments should application patterns change.
The Board welcomed the progress made and recognised the significant amount of work undertaken by staff to bring the project to this stage.

11.5 Trust Growth and Development

The CEO presented the Trust Growth and Development Report.
The Board reviewed progress against strategic priorities and considered the Trust's future growth trajectory.
The CEO reported that:

- Valley Park remained the primary growth project;
- relationships with external stakeholders remained positive;
- Trust reputation continued to strengthen;
- governance and operational structures had matured significantly;

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- capacity planning would remain a key consideration as the Trust continued to grow.

The Board discussed the balance between future growth opportunities and maintaining educational quality across existing schools.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether current central capacity remained sufficient to support both existing schools and future growth ambitions.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO acknowledged that capacity pressures existed in several areas and that workforce planning would form an important part of future strategic discussions. The Trust remained committed to ensuring that growth would only take place where quality could be maintained. The Board agreed that educational quality must remain the primary consideration in all future growth decisions.

✅ **APPROVED:** CEO and DCEO Reports received and noted.
☐ **ACTION:** Continue monitoring school improvement priorities, leadership capacity, SEND pressures and future workforce planning through Board and Committee reporting.

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12. Receive Management Accounts and Budgets

Report introduced by: EduFin Accountant
Sam Reilly joined the meeting remotely and presented the February, March and April 2026 Management Accounts.
The Board received a detailed overview of the Trust's financial position, including current forecasts, reserve levels, budget assumptions and emerging financial risks.
The Accountant advised that the Trust remained in a stable financial position with healthy reserve balances and effective financial controls.
The Board reviewed:

- Trust-wide financial performance;
- school-by-school budget positions;
- reserve levels;
- cash flow projections;
- staffing expenditure;
- future budget assumptions.

A detailed discussion then took place regarding forthcoming accounting changes, financial reporting requirements and their implications for academy trusts.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought clarification regarding the implications of forthcoming accounting standard changes and how these might affect future Trust reporting.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Accountant provided an overview of the changes and explained that whilst reporting arrangements would evolve, the underlying financial position of the Trust would not be materially affected. Directors would receive further guidance as implementation dates approached.

The Board welcomed the explanation and requested that a future briefing be provided once national guidance became clearer.

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Financial Position Overview
The Accountant advised that the Trust remained financially stable despite continuing sector-wide pressures relating to inflation, staffing costs and SEND expenditure.

The Board was advised that:

- reserves remained healthy and above minimum expectations;
- cash flow remained strong;
- staffing expenditure continued to be monitored closely;
- financial controls remained robust;
- budget assumptions had been reviewed carefully in preparation for year-end forecasting.

The Accountant highlighted that the Trust continued to benefit from strong financial oversight and effective budget management across all schools.

School-by-School Financial Review
The Board reviewed the financial position of each school and received assurance that leaders continued to manage budgets appropriately within the context of local challenges and pupil needs.
Particular attention was given to:

- SEND-related expenditure;
- staffing costs;
- future pupil number assumptions;
- sustainability of support arrangements across the Trust.

The Board noted that whilst some schools continued to experience greater financial pressures than others, the overall Trust position remained secure.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether the increasing complexity of pupil need was beginning to create structural budget pressures that could not be sustained through existing funding arrangements.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Accountant and CEO acknowledged that SEND funding remained one of the most significant challenges facing schools nationally. Whilst Omnia schools continued to support pupils effectively, there remained a gap between the level of need being experienced and the funding available to meet that need.
The Board was advised that leaders continued to review staffing models and support arrangements to ensure resources were deployed effectively.

Accounting Standards and Future Reporting
A detailed discussion took place regarding forthcoming changes to accounting requirements and the implications for academy trust reporting.
The Accountant explained the anticipated impact of changes to financial reporting standards and outlined how future accounts may appear different despite no material change in the Trust's underlying financial position.

Director Question / Challenge:
TJ questioned whether the proposed accounting changes would affect the way Directors interpreted reserves, liabilities and future financial forecasts.

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Response / Assurance Provided:
The Accountant confirmed that additional guidance and briefing materials would be provided to Directors before implementation. The purpose would be to ensure that Board members remained confident in interpreting financial information and understanding the impact of the revised reporting requirements.
The Board welcomed the explanation and agreed that a future briefing session would be beneficial.

Budget Planning for 2026–2027
The Board considered assumptions underpinning budget planning for the next financial year.
The CEO advised that budget preparation continued to be influenced by:

- SEND pressures;
- workforce planning;
- future funding uncertainty;
- Valley Park opening arrangements;
- national policy developments.

The Board noted that prudent assumptions had been applied throughout the budgeting process.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether sufficient flexibility remained within future budgets to respond to unexpected operational pressures.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The Accountant confirmed that reserves remained available to support unforeseen circumstances where necessary. However, the Trust continued to adopt a cautious approach to financial planning given ongoing uncertainty across the education sector.
The Board agreed that maintaining financial resilience remained a key strategic priority.

✅ **APPROVED:** February, March and April 2026 Management Accounts received and noted.
☐ **ACTION:** None

SR left the meeting following completion of this item.

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13. Review and Approve Expenditure Over £50,000

Introduced by: Chair

The Chair invited confirmation of any expenditure requiring Board approval under the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

The CEO confirmed that no expenditure exceeding the Board approval threshold had been incurred since the previous meeting requiring specific Board approval.

Directors noted that expenditure continued to be monitored through established financial controls and reporting arrangements.

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✅ **APPROVED:** No expenditure over £50,000 requiring Board approval.
☐ **ACTION:** None.

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14. Review and Approve Expenditure on Recruitment Needs Over £50,000

Introduced by: Chair

The Board reviewed recruitment activity undertaken since the previous meeting.
The CEO confirmed that there had been no recruitment commitments exceeding £50,000 requiring Board approval.
The Board noted that workforce planning continued to be reviewed carefully in light of financial pressures, school growth and future staffing requirements.
Directors discussed the importance of balancing educational need with long-term affordability.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought assurance that recruitment decisions continued to align with strategic workforce planning and financial sustainability.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO confirmed that all recruitment activity continued to be reviewed against pupil projections, budget forecasts and operational need. Recruitment decisions remained subject to challenge and scrutiny through established approval processes.

✅ **APPROVED:** No recruitment expenditure over £50,000 requiring Board approval.
☐ **ACTION:** None.

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15. Receive 'Dear Accounting Officer' Letter from ESFA (DfE)

Report introduced by: Chair

The Board received and reviewed the latest 'Dear Accounting Officer' correspondence issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
The Chair highlighted several key themes emerging from the letter, including:

- financial sustainability;
- governance effectiveness;
- accountability;
- internal scrutiny;
- public sector financial pressures;
- compliance expectations for academy trusts.

The Board noted that many of the themes raised reflected matters already receiving attention through the Trust's governance and compliance framework.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether any element of the letter identified concerns requiring additional action by the Trust.
Response / Assurance Provided:

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The CEO advised that the Trust was already addressing the key areas highlighted by the ESFA. Governance structures, financial oversight arrangements and internal scrutiny processes remained strong and aligned with sector expectations.
The Board agreed that the correspondence provided useful context regarding national priorities and emerging risks.

✅ **APPROVED:** 'Dear Accounting Officer' letter received and noted.
☐ **ACTION:** Continue monitoring national guidance and ESFA expectations through Board and Committee oversight.

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16. Policies: Review and Approve Policies in Line with OLT Policy Scheme of Delegation

Report introduced by: CEO

The CEO presented the policies requiring Board approval.

The Board reviewed:
- OLT Equality Statement;
- OLT Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Objectives.

The CEO explained the purpose of the documents and outlined the work undertaken to ensure that policy content reflected current legislative requirements and Trust values.
A detailed discussion took place regarding equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging within the Trust.

The Board considered how the policies supported:
- equality of opportunity;
- fair treatment of staff and pupils;
- inclusive practice;
- compliance with statutory responsibilities;
- promotion of positive organisational culture.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought clarification regarding how the objectives would be monitored and evaluated over time.
Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO advised that progress would be monitored through existing reporting mechanisms, including workforce data, school improvement processes, safeguarding monitoring and governance oversight.
The Board agreed that the policy framework provided a clear and proportionate approach to equality and inclusion.

✅ **APPROVED:** OLT Equality Statement approved.
✅ **APPROVED:** OLT Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Objectives approved.
☐ **ACTION:** Publish approved policies in accordance with Trust governance and policy management procedures.

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17. OLT Valley Park Academy Consultation

Report introduced by: CEO

The CEO presented the outcome of the statutory consultation undertaken in relation to Valley Park Academy and provided an update on the next stage of the project.
The Board was advised that the consultation period had now concluded and that stakeholder engagement had been positive throughout the process.

The consultation had included:

- public engagement events;
- online consultation opportunities;
- stakeholder communications;
- engagement with local residents and families;
- discussions with the Department for Education.

The CEO reported that feedback received had been overwhelmingly supportive and reflected strong community interest in the new school.
The Board heard that the project continued to progress in line with planned milestones and that significant work had been undertaken by Trust leaders to ensure readiness for opening.

Consultation Outcome
The CEO summarised the consultation findings and highlighted the positive response received from stakeholders.
Directors noted that:

- support for the school remained strong;
- concerns raised during consultation had been limited;
- issues identified had been appropriately addressed through the consultation process;
- community engagement had been constructive throughout.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors questioned whether any consultation responses raised issues that could materially affect the project's progression.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO confirmed that no consultation responses had identified issues that would prevent the project moving forward. Feedback received had been reviewed carefully and appropriate responses had been incorporated within the final consultation report.
The Board welcomed the positive outcome and recognised the considerable work undertaken by leaders to achieve this stage of the project.

Project Progress
The CEO provided a further update regarding the construction programme and preparations for opening.
The Board heard that:

- construction continued to progress positively;
- engagement with contractors remained constructive;
- operational planning was well advanced;
- admissions activity continued;
- staffing and organisational planning remained on track.

The Board acknowledged the scale of work being undertaken alongside normal Trust operations and commended those involved in delivering the project.

Director Question / Challenge:
Directors sought assurance that sufficient contingency planning remained in place should construction timelines change.

Response / Assurance Provided:
The CEO confirmed that contingency planning had been incorporated into project management arrangements and that regular dialogue continued with relevant stakeholders. Risks remained under active review through project governance arrangements.

Board Consideration of Consultation Report
The Board reviewed the final consultation report and considered whether it should be submitted to the Department for Education.
Having reviewed the findings, Directors agreed that the consultation had been conducted appropriately and that the report accurately reflected the responses received.

✅ **APPROVED:** Submission of the Valley Park Academy Consultation Report to the Department for Education.
☐ **ACTION:** Submit final consultation report to the Department for Education and continue project delivery in accordance with agreed timelines.

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18. Receive First Internal Audit Report (Spring Term – To Be Reviewed in Full at July Board)

Report introduced by: Head of Operations

The Head of Operations provided a summary of the Trust's first internal audit report of the academic year.

The Board was advised that the audit had already been considered through the Operations Committee and that a full review would be undertaken at the July Board meeting.
The audit had focused upon:

- procurement;
- value for money;
- tendering arrangements;
- financial controls.

The Board heard that the audit outcome had been highly positive.
Response / Assurance Provided:
The Head of Operations confirmed that:

- substantial assurance had been achieved;
- recommendations were limited in number;
- no significant weaknesses had been identified;
- management responses were being implemented.

Directors welcomed the outcome and recognised it as further evidence of the effectiveness of the Trust's control environment.

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The Board agreed that the full report would be reviewed in detail at the July meeting.

✅ **APPROVED:** Internal Audit update received and noted.
☐ **ACTION**: Present full Internal Audit Report and completed management responses to the July Board meeting.

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19. AOB

Introduced by: Chair

The Chair invited any additional items of business.

Governance and Future Board Development
A discussion took place regarding future governance development and strategic planning. The Board reflected positively on the Trust Strategy Away Day held earlier in the day and noted the value of dedicated strategic discussion away from routine governance business. Directors agreed that:

- the session had provided useful challenge;
- future governance priorities had been explored constructively;
- long-term planning remained essential as the Trust continued to grow.

The Board recognised the importance of maintaining a balance between operational oversight and strategic governance.
No further items of business were raised.

✅ **APPROVED:** AOB discussions noted.
☐ **ACTION:** None.

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20. Agree the Confidential Status of OLT Documents, Excluding the Agenda, Approved Minutes of Meetings and Approved Final Version Policies, Brought to Each Board Meeting (Ref: 1.50–1.51 ATH 2025)

The Chair reminded Directors of the requirements set out within the Academy Trust Handbook regarding the publication and confidentiality of Board documentation.
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✅ **APPROVED:** Confidential status of Board documentation confirmed.
☐ **ACTION:** None.

Meeting closed at approximately 14:20

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Appendix A – Summary of OLT Board Action Points (Tuesday 19 May 2026)

Action Point Number	Owner	Minute Item	Action	Deadline
1	All Directors	Item 3	Complete unconscious bias and GDPR training requirements.	September 2026
2	GCO	Item 4	Continue monitoring DBS, Section 128 and safeguarding compliance requirements.	Ongoing
3	All Directors	Item 5	Complete outstanding mandatory and CPD training requirements.	July 2026
4	GCO	Item 6	Upload approved March Board minutes to OLT website and GovernorHub and arrange Chair electronic signature.	Immediate
5	CEO / DCEO	Item 7	Continue monitoring safeguarding, SEND and leadership capacity pressures through governance reporting.	Ongoing
6	Head of Operations	Item 10	Oversight of completion of actions arising from annual fire risk assessment recommendations and report progress through Operations Committee.	Ongoing
7	CEO	Item 17	Submit Valley Park Academy Consultation Report to the Department for Education.	Immediate
8	Head of Operations	Item 18	Present full Internal Audit Report and management responses to July Board.	July 2026 Board

Document Reference Disclaimer

All documents and reports referred to within these minutes were circulated to members via GovernorHub in line with the corresponding agenda and published in advance of the meeting. Each minute item recorded herein directly corresponds to the relevant numbered agenda item for that meeting. Supporting papers are retained on GovernorHub as part of the official governance record in accordance with Omnia Learning Trust protocols.