Docusign Envelope ID: 52D8FDF6-774E-814C-832C-1DB0B2ADEF2A

PART 1 MINUTES OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD		
Date	**14th September 2026 @ 9.30am**	
Venue	**Virtual - Teams**	
Present:	Maureen Brettell (MB) Tim Haselwood (TH) Nic Brindle (NB) Charles Whittle (CW) Philip Sheldon (PS) Helen Davies (HD)	Chair of Trustees Vice Chair of Trustee CEO Trustee Trustee Trustee
Apologies:	Mark Heywood (MH) Ian Carden (IC) Kerry Inscker (KI)	Trustee Trustee Trustee
Absent:	Helen Philips (HP)	Director of Education
In attendance:	Leanne Takaki (LT) Chris Heptinstall (CHe) Suzanne Lloyd (SL) Chasca Twyman (CT) Ilona Adu-Gyamfi	Director of People Director of Business Independent Clerk to Trustees NGA Consultant (External Governance Review) Trust Office Manager and Governance Office

For all sets of minutes and backing papers it is taken that all will have been pre-read and coverage will therefore be limited to: • **accuracy • action points • challenge**
The new Academy Trust Handbook 2026: states that trustees should focus on three descriptors (replacing the 3 core functions):

· **Strategic leadership of the academy trust** – the board defines the trust vision, fosters the trust's culture and sets its strategy, including determining what (if any) governance functions are delegated
· **Accountability and assurance** – robust oversight of the trust's operations and performance
· **Engagement** – strategic oversight of relationships with stakeholders (parents, schools and communities)

Quorum required: 3 Trustees

The meeting opened: 9.30am

AGENDA ITEM 1	OPENING & GOVERNANCE FORMALITIES
For Noting	MB welcomed everyone to the meeting apologies were received from KI, MH, and IC and it was noted that NB, CHe and HD would be attending later.

AGENDA ITEM 2	YES TRUST GOVERNANCE REVIEW
Assurance	CT confirmed that the report had been written and fact checked by NB and MB, and this meeting was a chance to provide feedback and discuss through with the Trustees.

©Second2None School Support Ltd. 2020 Do not reproduce without permission from Laura Nicholson

Docusign Envelope ID: 52D8FDF6-774E-814C-832C-1DB0B2ADEF2A

CT provided a presentation which would be shared with the Trustees after the meeting. CT explained that she had reviewed the governance documents, that a self-evaluation survey was completed by the Trustees, that CT had met with the Trustees out of meetings and attended Trustee meetings and utilised all of the information to provide the report.

The report was structured on 8 key areas, and CT provided an overview for each area:

Culture – Strong ethos and values were evident, strong culture and fit of Trustees, new AoA adopted in 2022.

The NGA advocates for complete separation of roles so one recommendation was for NB not to be a Trustee. Scope for more systematic feedback from stakeholders to Trustees.

Q: TH asked for more clarity on NB not being a Trustee. **A:** CT explained that this was a new movement to ensure clarity and separation. CT recommended to review other Trusts to assess the set up.

Strategic Leadership – Currently at a critical junction for the Trust, CT was present for the meeting where the vision of the Trust was discussed and felt that there were really good, honest and open conversations held. CT felt that there was a clear vision for the Trust with a strategic plan in place.

The recommendation was to develop the strategic plan and to draft a strategic report on estate management to ensure this was strategic instead of operational.

NB joined the meeting.

Accountability & Assurance – Need to ensure that it is clear in the strategic plan as well as measurable targets. There was some duplication of information received, and CT noted that reports needed to be at the correct level of data. CT noted strong challenge and assurance from the Trustees.

Recommendations were that Trustees need to follow up on any challengers raised, need some further educational data at the correct level and need more detail in the SoD as there needs to be more clarity on responsibilities as well as on the finance and operations. The risk register needed to be more accessible and useable by the schools. TH confirmed that this needed to be reviewed at the Local Boards. **Q:** TH asked if the central team should be updating this? **A:** CT confirmed that yes, the central team should be running this, and the Trustees and Local Governors then challenge this.

MB noted that they have received an application of a new Trustee with accounting and audit skills and this was currently under review.

Q: PS noted that he felt that the Trust ethos was for pupil outcomes and asked if this was shown throughout this review? **A:** CT confirmed that yes this was very clear across the Trust.

Q: CW noted that the work needed to be carried out, there needed to be a review on streamlining to ensure that there wasn't excess work given to the Central Team as this was taking away from other work that needed to take place? **A:** CT agreed and stated this was

©Second2None School Support Ltd. 2020 Do not reproduce without permission from Laura Nicholson

Docusign Envelope ID: 52D8FDF6-774E-814C-832C-1DB0B2ADEF2A

	why it needed to be clear on the reporting process and the data levels to ensure that everything has a purpose. TH noted that for the Finance reports, they utilise the reports that CHe and his team use within their work, reducing any duplication. **Employer Responsibilities** – LT was in place who has driven this area significantly. Recommendations were to improve the CEO PM system, the move to a separate HR committee which has already been put in place by the Trust. The capacity of the Central Team needed to be reviewed, and the SoD needed further detail to give clearer responsibilities to the Executive Team. **Governance Structure** – Members and Trustees understand their roles, strong governance professionals in place. Recommendations were to review link Trustee roles as this wouldn't be viable as the Trust grew. The SoD needed to be stronger, and the Local Governance needed developing, as there was an overlap here and support was required to assist strengthening these Local Boards. IAG noted that following this review the Trust had utilised a recruitment service and was suggesting that this was extended to Local Boards. TH noted that there was conflict as there was the line management lines through the Executive Leadership as well as the Trustees. CT noted that the Local Board should be held to account and then should be reporting to the Board of Trustees. CT recommended that the Executive Team shouldn't be attending the Local Board meetings as this should be used to assist with the reporting process and for challenge and this was currently conflated. Local governance feedback needed to be developed. MB noted that she has been having 1:1's with the Trustees and one of the discussion topics was to discuss the Trustee links to the schools. NB noted that even though they were effective Local Boards, no one had wanted to Chair these meetings, and this was one of the challengers faced. CT noted that it had to be clear that this wasn't a large role and that support from the Trust was on offer. TH agreed with NB and felt that this was a large role, CT noted that it was putting in remits to ensure that this wasn't seen as a large role and that support was in place. IAG noted that this ran well at Trust level and that further work needed to be undertaken to ensure the correct support was given at local level. **Governance Practices –** Strong recruitment and induction in place for Trustees with good relations with the Executive Team. The recommendation was to ensure Trustees stay strategic and not operational. **Compliance –** Well organised and effective approach. The recommendation was again to keep this strategic and not operational. **Local Governance –** Was working well and values and ethos were reflected.

©Second2None School Support Ltd. 2020 Do not reproduce without permission from Laura Nicholson

	The recommendation was to separate Local Governance from executive oversight, further governance recruitment and training was required. **Conclusion –** This was a strong Board in an ambitious Trust. CT confirmed that the next step was for her report to be shared this week. CT was thanked for her time and her recommendations and feedback MB thanked NB and the team for the work carried out for the work carried out with CT.		
	What	**Who**	**When**
Action	For a detailed Job Description and support package to be drafted for the Local Board Chairs	MB/NB/SL/IAG	ASAP
Action	For an action plan to be drawn up to implement any recommendations made following the governance review. For this to be discussed further at the Next Full Board.	MB/NB	15th October 2026

CT and IAG left the meeting.
HD and CHe joined the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3	**YES TRUST UPDATE ON EXPANSION PLANS**
Assurance and Challenge	NB confirmed that the CEO report was on GVO and taken as read. NB provided an overview: - **Cornerstone** - The preopening report at Cornerstone had been completed. Still awaiting the DfE number. - **Fermain expansion** – The Trust has received the appropriate funding and approvals were in place. This would be due to open in September 2027. The MMU campus couldn't move forward, however the DfE were discussing a further building for Cornerstone which would allow for Fermain to move into the proposed Cornerstones building. - **TAN MAT** – Regional approval had been sought from the Regional Director of the Northeast. This was now with the legal team, and a timeline was being drawn up to include TUPE. **Q:** TH asked if there were any concerns highlighted since the due diligence stage? **A:** NB confirmed that there was nothing new to note. There had been an OFSTED inspection at one of the sites prior to the holidays, which NB had been present at. LT confirmed that she was still awaiting some further details on the HR elements due to the privacy agreements, this was being included within the legal review. CHe confirmed that he had been supporting with their yearend process, there was a lack of budget knowledge and sharing of details with the leaders, which

©Second2None School Support Ltd. 2020 Do not reproduce without permission from Laura Nicholson

	CHe was now working on. There would be an overspend noted in this years accounts due to a high reserve figure and a previous agreement on this. **Q:** MB asked if the Trust was confident that overall, this was a positive position **A:** NB and CHe confirmed that it was. - **Exam Success** – NB confirmed that all students exceeded expectations as well as exceeded national averages. NB noted that the information shared was level 1 and above, NEET was below national average. Maths was slightly below expectations; however English compensated for this and NB was exploring the rational for this. It was noted that despite concerns at BCAP they still exceeded expectations and were close to national levels. - **Capacity in Leadership** – HP has had some positive news on her health, and they were looking at a phased return after October half term. Other senior staff with medical issues have returned. **Q:** CW asked for the contingency plan should HP still not be able to return fully? **A:** NB explained that recruitment was in place and underway for Regional Directors. **Q:** HD asked if a salary benchmark had taken place? **A:** NB confirmed that yes, it had and it was high. NB noted that for the Northeast position, they had been unable to document the exact location of the role, and it was agreed that this may have to be readvertised once this could be advertised with further details. **Q:** TH asked how the Regional Directors report to the Executive Leadership Team? **A:** NB confirmed that these roles would feed into HP's role and the Head Teachers would feed into the Regional Directors. **Q:** HD asked if there were different onboarding with these roles? **A:** LT confirmed that yes, this was being reviewed, the Trust vision, values etc needed a lot of work to ensure that this was engrained into the roles. LT was in process of reviewing this further. LT noted that they had already started to look at this with other regional roles. NB noted that that the Regional Directors were very different roles as one covered preexisting Yes Trust schools and one would be to cover new Trust schools. **Q:** PS asked about local boards and filling these local board roles across the new schools. **A:** NB confirmed that he had been discussing the possibility of creating regional boards with CT, rather than separate boards per school. MB invited questions; however, none were raised. It was noted that this Saturday was the Leadership Day and invited any Trustees who wished to attend.

AGENDA ITEM 4	**ANY OTHER BUSINESS & ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**
To Discuss	There was no any other business to note.

AGENDA ITEM 5	**DATE OF NEXT MEETING/S**
	To be held at The Yes Trust Head Office – commencing at 11am • 10th December 2025 • 22nd April 2026 • 15th July 2026

©Second2None School Support Ltd. 2020 Do not reproduce without permission from Laura Nicholson

	Provisional dates – To be held virtually (TBC) • 15th October 2026 • 4th February 2027 • 13th May 2027

The meeting closed at 11.25am

Signed by:
Maureen Brettell
24C95584C77F449...

30-Oct-2026

©Second2None School Support Ltd. 2020 Do not reproduce without permission from Laura Nicholson