



**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Trustees of the Academy Trust Board, held at Langtree School, Woodcote, RG8 0RA on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 19.00**

**Present:**

Deborah Allen (DA)	Alan Dunstan (AD) – Chair of Trustees
Emma Ashley (EA)	Sarah Parish (SP)
Simon Bamford (SB)	Hayley Scott (HS)
Dan Brooks (DB)	Jan Seal-Roberts (JSR)
Karen Brown (KB)	Mark Taylor (MT)
	Clive Watts (CW)

**Apologies with Consent:**

Freya Garner (FG), Janet Haresnape (JH), Andy Lowe (AL), Christine Reeves (CRe), Catherine Roche (CRo)

**In attendance:**

Sarah Lonorgan (SL) – Clerk

***Trustee questions, challenges, and support are shown in red italics.***

**1. Introduction**

- The Chair opened the meeting at 19.02. It was noted that Kathryn Foster had resigned from the Trustee Board, effective 22 February 2026, and Andy Lowe had stepped down from the Board for the remainder of the school year for health reasons.
- The meeting was declared quorate, and trustees were invited to propose any additional items for discussion under Any Other Business. No items were received, and no declarations of material interest were made.

**2. Minutes of the previous ATB meeting held on 5 February 2026**

- The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2026 were approved as an accurate record after the Clerk made a minor typographical change. The Chair signed the approved minutes, and they were subsequently filed at the school.

Signed ..... Date .....



- All actions arising from the previous meeting were reviewed and confirmed as either complete or incorporated within the current agenda.
- It was decided that the staff survey and the updating of the school complaints policy would be carried over to the May ATB and decisions relating to the recently rescinded PEX and a Stage Three Panel Hearing would be discussed under the Headteacher's Report agenda item.

### 3. Headteacher's Report

- The Headteacher presented the key points from his report, which covered school operations, educational performance, safeguarding, attainment, and enrichment activities.

#### Site and Premises

- SB highlighted that the school had received a visit from the local MP, Freddie van Mierlo, to assess the damage caused by the fallen drama studio roof, and he had agreed to provide a supporting letter for the School's Urgent Capital Support bid and report, which was planned for submission on Monday. It was further noted that two DfE-related bodies were involved: UCS (Urgent Capital Support) – main route for funding the structural fix and RPA (Risk Protection Arrangement) – who were more likely to cover consequential damage and associated costs (e.g. damage within the drama studio, moving photocopiers/furniture, temporary storage and similar expenses), but not the main fix itself.
- SB confirmed that the school had maintained close contact with the DfE throughout and had followed their advice; there was a risk that the DfE might offer funding as a loan, and the funding outcome from DfE was uncertain; it was noted that bids from other schools had been decided in two days, whilst others had taken up to six months.
- SB confirmed that six contractors had been invited to tender for repair, rather than full rebuild, work; five had visited the site and four had submitted bids. It was noted that bids ranged from approximately £155k to £300k for the repair works. SB confirmed that bids were being reviewed to ensure a like-for-like scope before a recommendation was made.
- It was noted that the proposed works focused on installing fine mesh between structural and suspended ceilings and skimming and boarding the upper floor to avoid overloading. The Headteacher believed this solution would last the lifetime of the building.
- ***"If the DfE say no, are we in a position to fund this ourselves?"*** The Headteacher outlined that at the lower end of the cost range (around £150,000) the school might be able to manage



from existing funds, but that a figure nearer £300,000 would put the school under serious financial pressure.

- ***“Is it possible that the DfE would make us use the more expensive contractors?”*** SB confirmed that if all bids were genuinely like-for-like, it would be unlikely the DfE would insist on the most expensive one, and that if the DfE did not fund the works, the final contractor choice would rest with the school.
- **Action:** Send the UCS bid and accompanying report (including the MP’s letter) to the DfE on Monday. (SB)

### **Permanent Exclusion Update:**

- The Headteacher reported a serious incident involving a Year 8 boy who had violently assaulted another student. Clear CCTV evidence had been available, and the school had proceeded to a permanent exclusion (PEX). He outlined that the complexity of the case arose because the pupil attended an Oxfordshire school but lived in West Berkshire, and the two local authorities operated very differently within the same statutory framework.
- It was noted that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) customarily engaged with schools after a PEX decision, sometimes agreeing alternative provision to avoid PEX, whereas West Berkshire Council (WBC) refused to engage once a PEX was in place, insisting that PEX must be a genuine last resort and that they would only engage after Trustees had made their decision. This difference in approach had created a stalemate over arranging alternative provision and funding.
- It was further noted that advice from OCC led to a 10-day suspension agreement with the parents while the school sought alternative provision. WBC then began to engage, but critically. In parallel, the Headteacher had approached a local school near the excluded pupil’s home about an off-site direction. The Head of the proposed school agreed in principle, and the parents consented to a temporary placement there under an off-site direction. At that point, the PEX was rescinded, so West Berkshire would support an alternative package.
- However, on the eve of the planned start at the new school, the parents withdrew consent and stated that, since the PEX had been rescinded, they expected him to return to Langtree.
- The Headteacher confirmed that the pupil would return to Langtree on Monday, with West Berkshire agreeing to fund and support a package of therapeutic and behavioural interventions. The Headteacher outlined plans to keep the pupil out of normal lessons initially, adjust his timetable to avoid previous classes, and increase supervision, to safeguard the victim,



witnesses, and the wider community, as well as the returning pupil.

- The trustees appointed to the PEX panel highlighted that the evidence pack had raised questions. It was noted that an urgent meeting with the Headteacher and relevant pastoral/SEND staff was requested before, or shortly after, the pupil's return to discuss the case and lessons learned considering best practice.
- ***“Is there any funding available to support the victim in this scenario?”*** SB confirmed that the parent of the victim (a staff member) had declined formal support, and both the victim and assailant had already met informally at a football match and reconciled. It was noted that support was being offered not only to the victim but also to the witnesses. Additional supervision and timetable adjustments were planned to protect all parties when the pupil returned.
- ***“Why were the parents given a choice about off-site direction, when technically you don't need their permission to direct off-site?”*** SB confirmed that the Head insisted on parental and pupil agreement to support an off-site placement and outlined that the case was complicated by the existing EHCP and West Berkshire's limited support for a direction without parental consent. It was noted that without parental support and the receiving school's agreement, a forced direction would have been unworkable in practice.
- The Headteacher thanked the trustees and Clerk for their support and commitment in relation to the PEX and Complaints Panel Hearing. It was noted that both the PEX and the Independent Panel Hearing demanded a significant investment of time and resources from the school, trustees, and Clerk.
- Trustee training from the NGA (around four and a half hours) on exclusions and suspensions was noted as intensive but valuable by the Trustees assigned to the PEX panel, and their recommendation that the whole ATB should undertake the training as part of the Trustee Training plan was noted.
- Trustees reiterated they wished to meet quickly with the Headteacher (and pastoral/SEND lead) to raise necessary issues before or soon after the return.
- **Action:** Arrange a meeting with the trustees on the rescinded PEX panel and the pastoral/SEND lead to discuss the PEX case and the reintegration/support plan before the student is fully reintegrated into school. (SB)
- **Action:** Confirm whether Suspensions and Complaints training should be added to the Trustee Training Plan. (HS)



### **Stage 3 Complaints Panel Update:**

- It was noted that a Stage 3 Complaints Panel hearing had taken place. SB confirmed that he was not supportive of the Independent Panel's decision to uphold the parent complaint, but considered the matter closed. It was noted that the school had acted on the recommendations of the Complaints panel and a review of the school's approach to complaint handling and the complaints policy was underway, with a revised policy being brought to the next ATB for approval.
- **Action:** Complete the revision of the school complaints policy with the Clerk and CRo and bring the updated policy to the next ATB for approval. (SB)

### **Creativity Day:**

- Trustees acknowledged that the Creativity Day was a huge success. SB thanked HS for her contribution and noted the value to pupils.

### **Attendance:**

- The Headteacher reported on attendance data by group. It was acknowledged that EHCP attendance was significantly lower than that of other groups. The Headteacher reported that this was due to a very small number of pupils who were non-attenders or very sporadic attenders. It was further noted that two pupils were now off roll: one had gained a place in more specialist provision (supported by the school), and one had been withdrawn for elective home education, against school advice. The Headteacher highlighted that these outlier cases would gradually drop out of the data set, improving headline figures.
- ***“Is there anything more we should have been doing within school to support the student who moved to specialist provision?”*** The Headteacher confirmed that the level and nature of the child's physical disability meant that the specialist setting offered support that went beyond what the school could realistically provide, even though the school was accessible by mainstream standards.



## **Curriculum Performance - FFT Outcomes / Subject Concerns – English, Travel & Tourism, French**

- The Headteacher referred to the FFT pupil tracker and subject-level data provided in his report, highlighting that certain subjects appeared in red on the FFT data (negative progress predictions), particularly English, Travel and Tourism, and French (with caveats).
- The Headteacher shared that English outcomes had been weaker than expected in the prior year and that current FFT predictions, based on January mocks, were behind expectations. He reminded trustees that English mock results at this point in the year had historically been very low, because pupils were usually sitting a full language paper for the first time, and the department marked strictly to the exam board's mark schemes and grade boundaries. In previous years, there had always been substantial improvement between January and the final exams, but last year broke that pattern, which was now a cause of concern.
- It was noted that, in response, the school had expanded the use of the more accessible English 2.0 route for lower-attaining pupils, intensified the revision programme, and re-purposed some non-exam subject time to deliver additional English revision and skills work. The Headteacher stated that, without last year's weaker results, he would have full confidence in the usual pattern of improvement; as it stood, he remained cautiously optimistic but acknowledged that English was a key risk area this year.
- It was further noted that Travel and Tourism had been a long-standing area of concern due to a newer and less experienced teacher leading the course. He shared that the subject tended to attract less academically motivated students, and there had been operational issues with coursework and exam administration over the last couple of years.
- Steps to improve pupil outcomes were outlined by the Headteacher. Operational issues had been resolved, and a very experienced Head of Teaching & Learning was collaborating closely with the teacher to improve practice, but it was noted that a "quick win" was not expected, and improvement was likely to be gradual.
- In response to a question from a Trustee about falling predicted outcomes in French, the Headteacher acknowledged that French also appeared negative in the FFT report, although it was not flagged in red like English and Travel & Tourism.
- It was noted that he had complete confidence in the Head of French and the MFL team and explained that, at the point the mock data was submitted, pupils had only completed two components – the two more demanding papers – and had not yet taken the speaking



assessment, which was usually a relative strength. He therefore believed the current mock/FFT picture to be skewed and expected final French outcomes to be stronger than the interim data suggested.

### **Admissions Pressure, Parental Preference and Capacity**

- The Chair drew attention to points in the Headteacher's written report about admissions and capacity.
- It was noted that parental preference frequently overrode capacity considerations, particularly in relation to pupils with higher needs. Trustees expressed concern that resources and staffing were already very stretched; that the system could, in effect, compel the school to admit more complex cases than it had capacity to support fully; and that the principal pressure point was Key Stages 3 and 4.

## **4. Committee Reports**

### **a) Finance & General Purposes (EA)**

#### **i) Budget Update**

- EA shared an update on the current year's financial forecast. The forecast outcome was now a loss of approximately £100,000, compared with the original budgeted loss of £57,000.
- The main drivers of the variance were outlined as higher-than-planned staffing costs and additional costs associated with the drama studio works.
- It was noted that there was an upside if the DfE approved the school's urgent capital support (UCS) bid and related funding, which could offset some of the estates-related costs.
- It was noted that no new major financial risks had emerged since the previous ATB/F&GP update; the pattern of variances was broadly unchanged.

#### **ii) Education Estates Strategy**

- The School Business Manager had provided a short paper on the national Education Estates Strategy and what it might mean for the school.



- Key points noted were that the school would be required to submit annual estates return as part of the strategy; further work was needed to clarify what governance route those returns, and associated decisions should follow (e.g. F&GP only, or F&GP plus ATB). EA offered support to the School Business Manager if needed.
- The School Business Manager would continue to explore the detailed implications and bring back a clearer proposal on process and governance to the next F&GP Committee meeting.

### **iii) Schools Resource Management Self-Assessment (SRMSA)**

- The F&GP chair indicated that the discussion on the SRMSA would be taken up under that later item rather than in detail at this point.
- Trustees recognised SRMSA as an important assurance tool, particularly in the context of a larger-than-planned deficit and ongoing estates pressures.

### **iv) Policies reviewed and approved by the F&GP Committee**

- It was noted that the following policies had been reviewed and approved at F&GP:
  - Business Continuity Policy.
  - Competitive Tendering Policy.
  - Lettings Policy.
  - Trips and Visits Policy.
- EA highlighted that the Competitive Tendering Policy underpinned current and future estates tenders (including the drama studio work), giving assurance that procurement processes were compliant and robust.
- It was also noted that the H&S audit report and Risk Register would be discussed as part of the Trustee Updates agenda item.

## **b) Curriculum and Standards (JSR)**

### **i) Membership and Link Roles**

- It was decided that DA would take on the Pupil Premium governor role, alongside her existing responsibilities, following the resignation of KF. The committee welcomed DA to this expanded remit.



## ii) PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education) – report from link visit

- JSR reported on a recent Curriculum & Standards link visit with Jess Allen, Head of PSHE, where the structure and content of the PSHE curriculum had been reviewed.
- Key points from the visit were noted as follows: most PSHE content is delivered as tutor-time lessons, structured into five units across the year. It was noted that this helped build trust and openness, especially for sensitive topics, and it strengthened tutor–student relationships.
- The programme was supported by the school nurse, who provided specialist input.
- Trustees felt the range and depth of PSHE content was strong and appropriate, and matched statutory expectations.
- The enrichment programme (e.g. careers days, mock interviews, wider activities) was recognised as a significant additional strength of the school's offer.

## iii) Curriculum changes

- The committee had received an update from the Head of Teaching and Learning on the proposed national changes to curriculum and assessment, due to take effect from September 2028 (affecting the current Year 8).
- Key aims of the reforms were noted as follows: Reducing overall GCSE exam time by around 10% per student (approx. 3 hours), increasing emphasis on digital literacy and AI, financial education and fake news/media literacy; an entitlement for all students who wish to do so to study triple science, a stronger focus on oracy (speaking and listening skills) and the removal of the EBacc as a formal performance measure, which aligned with Langtree's long-standing approach of prioritising what is right for students over EBacc metrics.
- It was further noted that the school intended to track developments closely, attend relevant briefings and be in a position by April 2027 to understand the finalised national curriculum and adjust the school's curriculum in good time.
- It was noted that, for Curriculum & Standards, Ofsted would be particularly focused on:
  - Inclusion.
  - Quality of curriculum and teaching.
  - Achievement and progress.



- Attendance and behaviour.
- Personal development and wellbeing.
- Trustees agreed it was important to be clear on how the school evidence strengths in these areas, not just that it does the work.
- Inclusion emerged as the central theme running through current policy and future reform, and whilst Langtree had a strong culture of inclusion, the new frameworks (including SEND reforms and curriculum changes) would require it to be made more explicit and evidenced.
- Trustees concluded that, while there may be differences of view about how certain aspects are best delivered, they were reassured that senior leaders responsible for inclusion were thinking about the right issues, which would be at the forefront of Curriculum & Standards work going forward.

### **c) Pastoral and Community (SP on behalf of Cro)**

#### **i) P&C Committee meeting headlines**

- SP shared an update from the P&C Committee meeting. It was noted that staff wellbeing, pupil wellbeing and behaviour (including bullying and “banter”), the impact of the drama studio closure on the creative life of the school, findings from the whole-school pupil feedback/wellbeing survey, breakfast and food access concerns, the implications of SEND reforms for pastoral provision and workload, Pupil Premium and inclusion capacity, particularly the load on Susanna (SENDCo) and her team, and plans for nurture and inclusion spaces within the re-planned estate had been discussed.

#### **ii) Staff Wellbeing**

- It was noted that staff wellbeing continued to be a concern, but feedback from the SLT suggested staff were now more confident and positive, with a sense that there was “light at the end of the tunnel.”
- The committee acknowledged the strain created by:
  - Ongoing SEND and inclusion demands.
  - Estates disruptions (e.g. drama studio).
  - General workload and accountability pressures.
- Staff wellbeing initiatives (e.g. small recognition events, “Wellbeing Wednesdays”)



were noted as important and appreciated.

### **iii) Impact of drama studio closure on creative provision**

- Trustees revisited concerns that the closure of, and works to, the drama studio might undermine the school's creative offer (drama/music), but it was noted that staff had effectively mapped out performance space elsewhere to mimic the drama studio stage, and rehearsals were among the best work they had ever seen at the school. The committee concluded that, although the closure had been disruptive, the quality of creative output had not been diminished, and this was a testament to staff and student resilience.

### **iv) Behaviour**

- The committee discussed findings on behaviour and bullying from the pupil feedback survey. It was noted that several students could not clearly distinguish between "banter" and bullying. The school was aware of the misconception and was actively addressing it through PSHE and tutor-time discussions, assemblies, and pastoral interventions, with clear messaging about what constituted bullying and when "banter" crosses the line.
- Trustees recognised that this was a nuanced cultural issue, not simply a policy gap, and supported ongoing work to shift pupil understanding and language.

### **v) Whole School Pupil Feedback Survey**

- It was noted that the recent whole-school pupil wellbeing survey had achieved a very strong response rate (~90%), and the survey results were described as largely positive, with key points noted as: pupils generally feeling that there were places where they could feel comfortable at lunchtime; concerns about home computer access for some pupils; and the fact that a significant proportion of pupils saw mobile phones as a distraction, which linked directly to the school's mobile phone policy that was shared as part of the Trustee information pack.
- Trustees noted that around 62–64% of students did not eat breakfast. Trustees found this very concerning, particularly because the school's break and lunch times were late, meaning a long period without food for many pupils. Specific actions were discussed by the Trustees, who agreed that this was a significant pastoral and inclusion risk to



keep under review.

#### **vi) SEND reforms**

- The committee considered the emerging SEND reforms / white paper and pastoral implications. SP confirmed that she had read as much of the documentation as possible, but she was intentionally holding back from detailed meetings with Susanna (SENDCo) until the SLT felt ready, to avoid adding pressure while plans were still forming.
- It was recognised that SEND reforms touched:
  - Finances (funding routes, top-ups, allocations).
  - Mainstream classroom practice (greater emphasis on inclusion rather than withdrawal).
  - Pastoral systems, as more pupils with complex needs remain in mainstream classes.
- Workload pressure on the SENDCo lead, was discussed (SEND, the new framework, and Pupil Premium) which would be exacerbated when her assistant (also SEND-qualified) left on maternity leave.
- The Headteacher outlined steps to mitigate this, including a staff member taking on the Pupil Premium role, and reiterated that, as Inclusion was regarded as a whole-school responsibility, not just a single role, all leaders would share this agenda.
- It was further noted that staff would not automatically return to their old rooms once the works were complete. A new nurture room would be developed with better-placed pastoral offices and small-group rooms. These changes were intended to support integrated inclusion, with pupils spending more time in mainstream lessons and using nurture/withdrawal spaces strategically, rather than as a default.
- Trustees agreed that the demand and complexity of inclusion and SEND work were increasing, while capacity (people and resources) remained tight.
- Despite this, they felt the school's pastoral culture, staff commitment, and willingness to rethink spaces and roles put it in a strong position to meet these challenges, provided that: workload was monitored carefully, and responsibilities (e.g. Pupil Premium) were distributed sensibly rather than resting on a single individual.



## **5. Trustee Updates**

### **a/b) Articles of Association and funding agreements**

- The Chair provided an update on progress with the Articles of Association and related funding agreements. After calls and extensive email exchanges with the solicitors, updated documents had been prepared. It was noted that the Articles of Association were submitted to the DfE on 19 February, the Master and Supplemental Funding Agreements were submitted on 24 February, and the DfE had allocated a caseworker.
- Trustees were advised to expect a delay of around 4–6 weeks before receiving feedback.
- It was noted that during the drafting process, the Chair queried references in the model Articles to the possibility of having employees as trustees, which conflicted with more recent DfE guidance. The solicitors advised that it was now merely “desirable” not to have employees as trustees, rather than explicitly forbidden in the model wording.
- It was further noted that the trust would continue its established stance of not having staff trustees; the number of appointments the trust could make had been reduced from 50 to 20, including two parent trustees, to align with current expectations and practice, and subject to DfE approval, trustees would receive the final approved Articles for formal approval at the next ATB.

### **c) Trustee Indemnity Insurance**

- While reviewing the Articles and related documentation, the Chair reported that he had noticed references to trustee indemnity insurance and investigated the school's current position. Historically, he had understood that trustees' personal liability was limited to £10, but this was found not to be correct.
- It was noted that the £10 liability limit applied to members, not trustees, and Trustees were covered under the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA), which provides trustee indemnity up to £10 million, subject to exclusions for any criminal activity.

### **d) Safeguarding Link Trustee**

- It was noted that AL had stepped back from his role as safeguarding link trustee. The Chair reported that he had previously written to the board inviting expressions of interest in the role.



- Only one response had been received, but this had not been considered the right match for either the individual or the board.
- The Chair confirmed that CRo was in conversation with a potential candidate about taking on the safeguarding link role, and an outcome was awaited.

#### **e) Residential complaints**

- The Chair updated Trustees on a resident complaint and a linked housing development proposal at Church Farm, opposite the library on Reading Road. Residents had raised complaints and a petition about teacher and parent parking along the road outside the school and near the community centre.
- Proposals under discussion included: Introducing double yellow lines along part of the road outside the school and creating a thirty-space car park on the opposite side of the road for community use.
- It was noted that the Headteacher attended a parish meeting on 10 March, where around twenty-five people (including parish councillors and residents) discussed the car park and its implications. There had been a suggestion that the school should build an on-site car park to solve the issue; the Headteacher had strongly pushed back, arguing that it would not be a good use of school funds and it would be an inappropriate use of limited school land.
- It was noted that the Headteacher agreed to survey all staff who drive to school, asking where they currently park and why they choose those locations. This data would then be used to inform the next parish council meeting discussions and help shape decisions on the car park and road markings.
- Trustees revisited the issue of Section 106 (S106) funding in the context of current and proposed local housing developments (including Church Farm). It was noted that previous developments had contributed S106 monies used, for example, towards science buildings at the school.
- Whilst there was no guarantee that Langtree would receive a share of any new S106 pot, the Headteacher confirmed his intention to argue strongly that Langtree should receive an appropriate portion of any future S106 education funding.
- As part of the broader estates' discussion, the Chair reported that he had been in contact with the Director of Properties and Assets at OCC to seek clarity on the process for releasing land. He had also spent time working through the details of the lease



descriptions and boundaries with the solicitors. It was noted that all current leases were in order and some elements were technically “air leases” – e.g. over the sports hall – limiting vertical development, but this was not a current practical concern.

#### **f) H&S Audit Report**

- An internal scrutiny review of Health & Safety had been commissioned and completed.
- It was noted that more than three hundred individual line items were assessed. Seventeen items were rated red and seven items amber in a RAG rating system.
- Despite those findings, the overall judgement from the Trustees was that the school had a good level of health and safety compliance.
- It was further noted that site security remained a recurring concern, particularly around perimeter security and how easily the site could be accessed, ensuring appropriate controls while maintaining a welcoming environment. It was agreed that the F&GP Committee and SLT would use the RAG-rated findings to prioritise follow-up work and monitor progress.

#### **g) Risk Register**

- Trustees received an overview of the school’s risk management arrangements. It was noted that the Risk Register is reviewed by Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) three times per year (October, March, July), and over the past 12 months, the C&S and P&C committees had also reviewed the parts of the register relevant to their remit, which had informed scoring and controls.
- It was further noted that a Risk Management Policy exists and was technically due for review; however, because it was relatively new, the SLT and the School Business Manager would review both the policy and the way the Risk Register was being presented, and then bring back proposals in the coming months.
- EA confirmed that she had filtered the risks to show those with a score above 15, i.e., all red risks and the highest-rated amber risks. Four risks were currently scored at 20 (red): Health and Safety, EHCP / SEND pressures and inclusion, Cyber Security and Estate deterioration/condition of buildings.
- Health and Safety and Estate Deterioration were noted as being included within other agenda items, so a detailed update was only provided on Cyber Security.



#### **h) Cyber Security Internal Scrutiny**

- A separate internal scrutiny review of Cyber Security had also been undertaken. The report had been received by the Headteacher and senior team and was being analysed.
- It was noted that this risk was one of the four highest-rated areas on the register and that trustees would expect a summary of findings, a prioritised action plan, and a progress update to be provided at the next F&GP meeting.
- **Action:** SLT to review the Cyber Security internal scrutiny report in detail, agree priorities, and present a RAG-prioritised action plan to the next F&GP, with progress reported back at the next ATB meeting.
- It was further noted that a risk relating to succession planning remained Amber; there had been discussion about a separate risk specifically for the Headteacher's succession, but the committee had agreed to retain a single, general succession planning risk.
- The risk associated with falling student numbers had been reduced in likelihood, reflecting strong September intake indications and the school being significantly oversubscribed.
- A new Amber high-level risk had been added concerning the capacity to keep up with current legislation and compliance requirements (e.g. Ofsted and other statutory demands), particularly given the school's position as a single academy trust rather than part of a larger MAT.
- Specific compliance risks, such as safeguarding and child protection, had been retained as separate entries in addition to the new generic compliance risk.
- It had been noted that two existing finance-related risks might appropriately be merged into a single consolidated risk in future updates.
- Overall, the Trustees confirmed that they were satisfied that while the risks were understood and monitored, they had not been at a level to cause undue concern, and the practice of reviewing the register three times per academic year and bringing it annually to the board was endorsed.

#### **i) Trustee Training**



- It was noted that a training report had been run by the school, identifying two trustees whose mandatory training had expired; they had been contacted and asked to complete this as soon as possible.
- It was decided that the Clerk had taken on management of the relationship with NGA and NGA training tracking so that HS could focus on other training areas.

#### **j) Updated Board Objectives 2025/26**

- The Chair highlighted that the primary board objective relating to succession planning had remained ongoing. Discussions had been taking place between committee chairs, the Headteacher, and the Chair regarding options considering the Vice-Chair stepping down in December and the Chair planning to step back in July.
- The Clerk noted that the annual planner for 2026–2027 had already been released, that the identification and appointment of a safeguarding trustee remained an urgent priority and that the board's focus had been on compliance and strategic governance, rather than operational matters.

#### **k) Governance Update:**

- The Clerk reported that NGA access had been refreshed and that new invitation emails had been sent to those who previously did not have access. Newly appointed trustees confirmed receipt. The Clerk reminded Trustees that they could reset their passwords directly on the NGA website.
- The governance and compliance briefing note had been circulated. The Clerk reminded committee leads to familiarise themselves with Martin's Law and other compliance updates and to embed the required checks into their committee business. It was noted that the Clerk would re-send the overview to all members of the Trustee Board.
- Action: Resend the NGA/governance access email and supporting note where trustees had lost access or forgotten passwords. (SL)

### **6. Approval of Statutory Policies**

- The policies and procedures were discussed and approved as outlined in the agenda:



a) **Academies – School Resource Management Self-Assessment Checklist** – approved

b) **Competitive Tendering Policy** – approved with the addition of a tier three sign-off

- It was noted that the School Resource Management (SRM) annual return consisted of around forty-seven questions on financial management and governance, and the checklist had been prepared by the School Business Manager and reviewed by the F&GP Committee.
- All but two questions had been answered positively. Two questions had been marked as “in part”: which related to whether the trust met the six core digital and technology standards and whether the trust had a clear plan for the use of reserves on the balance sheet, reflecting uncertainty around the drama studio and wider estate strategy.
- It was further noted that the return was due by 28 March and that, while responses were not usually followed up in detail, non-submission would trigger follow-up from the local authority.
- ***Does the two-authoriser approval remain sufficient for very high-value transactions (e.g. over £5 million)?***
- It was acknowledged that the Board would consider strengthening the process by requiring three signatories or equivalent for very high-value approvals, balancing this against the need for timely decisions.
- ***Does the use of round threshold figures (e.g. £25k, £35k) remain appropriate in the current inflationary environment, and does this have implications for budget holder autonomy?***
- It was noted that existing approval arrangements had “worked” to date, and authorisers frequently challenged submissions where they lacked clarity. It was further noted that thresholds had previously been updated to reflect rising costs and larger contract values.

## 7. Any Other Business

- No matters were brought forward or declared. The meeting closed at 20.49.

8. **Date of next ATB meeting:** 14 May 2026, 19.00



**Action Items – Langtree ATB, 19 March 2026**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action Description</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Deadline/Notes</b>
3	Send the UCS bid and accompanying report (including the MP's letter) to the DfE on Monday.	SB	New	Monday
3	Arrange a meeting with the trustees on the rescinded PEX panel and the pastoral/SEND lead to discuss the PEX case and the reintegration/support plan before the student is fully reintegrated into school.	SB	New	ASAP
3	Complete the revision of the school complaints policy with the Clerk and CRo and bring the updated policy to the next ATB for approval.	SB	Carry Over	Next ATB
3	Confirm whether Suspensions and Complaints training should be added to the Trustee Training Plan.	HS	New	Next ATB
4a	Continue developing a strategic estates plan, including the exploration of longer-term and more transformational options, and report back to the Board at a future ATB.	AD	Carry Over	Next ATB
5k	Resend the NGA/governance access email and supporting note where trustees had lost access or forgotten passwords.	SL	New	Next ATB