

Trustees' Report (continued)

Section 172 (1) Statement for the Financial Year 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022

The Trustees of the Board of Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust consider, both individually and collectively, that they have acted to promote the success of the Trust taking into account the needs of pupils, colleagues, Trustees, members and other stakeholders and the Trust's wider role in society.

In doing so they have taken into account the following matters set out in s172 (1) (a) to (f) of the Companies Act 2006:

- a)** The likely consequences of any decision in the long term,
- b)** The interests of the Trust's employees,
- c)** The need to foster the Trust's business relationships with suppliers, customers, and others,
- d)** The impact of the Trust's operations on the community and the environment,
- e)** The desirability of the Trust maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct, and
- f)** The need to act fairly as between Trustees of the Trust.

The Board is mindful that the long-term success of the Trust is critically dependent on the way we work with a large number of notable stakeholders. The following table sets out our focus on the key relationships and shows how engagement with them is addressed by the Board of Trustees, committees, and work streams to help the Trust's decision making. It is important for all Trustees of the Board to gain sufficient understanding of the issues relating to every stakeholder so that their views are considered in Board discussions.

A robust governance framework is in place to ensure that stakeholder considerations are captured, and enhancements made to strengthen the views of our stakeholders in the Board meetings.



Trustees' Report (continued)

Stakeholder Group	Forms of Engagement	How this stakeholder group influenced the Board agenda and long-term decision-making s172 (1)(a)
<p>People (our employees) s172(1)(b)(e)</p> <p>At the end of August 2022, the trust had 1,386 employees.</p> <p>We create an environment in which our people can make a positive contribution, develop their careers and reach their potential. Our ambition is to be an employer of choice across the Education sector and across Bradford.</p>	<p>At Board level: Employees are a key asset to the Trust. We can't have great schools without great people. The BDAT "Growth to Great" strategy is now in its final year of a three-year strategy with the main emphasis being enabling the Trust to be an employer of choice. The Board receives regular updates on progress against the Trust's Employee strategic objectives including key performance recruitment and retention data. The Trust board has created a BDAT People sub-committee to focus on staffing development across BDAT and an Inclusion committee that has a golden thread through all aspects of BDAT work.</p> <p>In 2020, BDAT launched our sister website "BDAT People" setting out our core professional development offer for staff, including details of the professional ITT, ECT and NPQ opportunities available to staff, details of our in-house professional learning communities (PLCs) and our wellbeing offer for staff.</p> <p>At Academy Level: To facilitate engagement, we have established a 'Talent Management work stream including executive team members, school leaders and other key staff. We have a range of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to support staff knowledge sharing plus wellbeing and HR workstreams.</p> <p>Engagement with our employees takes many forms with regular and ongoing discussions. This includes an annual staff conference, staff surveys, annual career discussions, work streams and professional development networks and termly Chief Executive Officer newsletters.</p>	<p>During the year 2021-22 the Trust has embedded Board approved employee development initiatives to motivate, engage and support high performance and to retain key talent.</p> <p>Early Career Development Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust is a key strategic partner in the Early Careers Framework with the Ambition Institute. This has provided additional training for our early careers teachers and provides mentoring and tutoring opportunities for our more experienced staff. During 2021-22 we also increased the number of teacher trainee placements within our academies recruiting more Newly Qualified Teacher's (NQT) and teaching trainees within our Trust. We are the main partner in the roll out of the outstanding Gorse ITT to Bradford, which is part of the Department for Education Innovation work stream project. The number of apprentices also increased across the Trust utilising the Governments' apprenticeship levy program in core business and administrative support areas.</p> <p>Continuous Development The Director for Professional and Career Development strategically leads professional development. All academies have a ring-fenced staff development budget to invest in their employees – we are seeking to maximise the effective use of this by investing in programmes across our family of schools.</p> <p>Leadership Development Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust has continued to roll out and deliver the full suite of National Professional Qualification (NPQ) leadership qualifications often utilising funding through the opportunity area. We have introduced a number of additional specialist NPQs during 2021-22.</p> <p>Diversity and Wellbeing Reflecting our Christian ethos and values. Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust encourages academic, vocational, mental, physical, and spiritual opportunities and development for each member of our academies. We encourage both professional and personal development and seek to support staff wellbeing. The Trust and each of our academies have Diversity and Wellbeing policies that set out our wellbeing offer including coaching, mentoring, lifestyle coaches and mindfulness. In 2021-22 the Trust focused on promoting and celebrating Inclusion – one of the key Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust values, shared across our family of schools. We define it as "understanding everyone is equal, without exception, valuing and encouraging diversity and difference and seeking to learn from others."</p> <p>Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust launched its inclusion strategy at our annual staff conference in October 2021 where influential speakers engaged Trust colleagues about "What is Inclusion".</p>

Trustees' Report (continued)

Stakeholder Group	Forms of Engagement	How this stakeholder group influenced the Board agenda and long term decision-making s172 (1)(a)
<p>Our Pupils s172(1)(c)(d)(e)</p> <p>The Trust supported 9,626 pupils during the financial year 2021-22 across our 18 academies. Each academy has a curriculum improvement plan with targeted support for pupils with the greatest need.</p>	<p>At Board level: Our academies hold the key relationship with our pupils. This is intentional as each of our schools are very different and serve a unique set of families. The Trust however does receive intelligence and data on a range of areas which highlight trends, concerns and areas for development. These include attendance, safeguarding, behaviour, education outcomes, cultural capital and extracurricular experiences and so on.</p> <p>Trustees do have an active role within our Academies. From 2018 we established Trustee link roles where each Trustee is a named link with an Academy and spends time throughout the year within a school and talking to staff and students. This gives qualitative feedback on pupils' views and lived experiences.</p> <p>When the Trust leads on core school business activity e.g., headteacher recruitment, student voice is always built into the interview process.</p> <p>At Academy level: Schools have extensive mechanisms to ensure student voice is heard. For example, most schools have student councils which feed directly into Governors, most schools complete regular student and parent surveys throughout the year. All schools consult with pupils on significant changes such as the school day, plans for trips, food choice, environment etc.</p> <p>During 2021-22 the Trust was proud to launch a new student voice activity reaching across all secondary schools and a number of primary schools in the Trust. The "Bradford Student Pandemic Recovery Summit" brought together students from across the five Multi-Academy Trusts in the city to meet Civic leaders to highlight and debate what changes and improvements they would like to see across the Local Authority Area.</p>	<p>At Board level: Education outcomes and pupil experience is at the core of all strategic plans reflecting the Trust's mission statement "to provide high quality education within the context of Christian belief and practice so that every child can fulfil their academic potential and accomplish their individual goals". Student voice helped shape the new BDAT strategy for 22-25 and remains one of the 7 key priorities in the next stage of our journey.</p> <p>Trustee decision making is always informed by the qualitative and quantitative feedback set out in the column on the left. For example, one of the themes from the Pandemic recovery summit was disadvantage and poverty therefore Trustees receive regular reports on the disadvantage gap and the impact of the pandemic in increasing disparity in children's outcome and the attendance. As a result, Trustees have ensured that interventions focused on narrowing the gap and improving attendance are central to the 2021-22 Recovery Premium and School Led funds.</p> <p>At Academy level: Student feedback informs all areas of academy action planning. Governors and members of the central executive team regularly visit schools and talk directly to students and families to ensure they have a say.</p>

Trustees' Report (continued)

Stakeholder Group	Forms of Engagement	How this stakeholder group influenced the Board agenda and long term decision-making s172 (1)(a)
<p>Our Suppliers s172(1)(c)(e)</p> <p>Provide goods and services on which we rely to deliver a quality education to our pupils.</p>	<p>At Board level: Trustees are responsible for the strategic running of the Trust so do not frequently interact with suppliers. Reports are submitted to the Board on matters of importance regarding supplies for example, the ethical and environmental choice of new providers.</p> <p>Trustees do support high value procurement of suppliers for example Trust wide human resources. The Finance and Resources Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee are sub-committees of the Board and review details of related party transactions and areas of high spend e.g., supply staff cover.</p> <p>At Academy level: The Trust has a robust procurement policy with delegated authorities through the Scheme of Delegation. Academies regularly benchmark budgets to ensure value for money and spend against similar schools.</p>	<p>At Board level: The Board sets the principles around the type of supplier they want Trust business to be associated with e.g., companies with a similar ethos, companies with a local Bradford focus or companies with a charitable background. This provides the parameters for procurement. This is checked through external audit and concerns would be reported to the Board as appropriate. Trustees also pay particular attention to suppliers who may have a related party interest or are high value. Other than that, Trustees are not expected to interact with day-to-day transactional business. View My Financial Insights, a new tool provided by the ESFA, helps the trust quickly benchmark suppliers for value for money.</p>
<p>Our Regulators s172(1)(c)</p> <p>This includes financial regulators such as the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the Department for Education and Regional Schools Commissioner and other bodies who hold the Trust to account such as Ofsted or the Diocese of Leeds.</p>	<p>At Board level: It is the Trust's policy to be open and transparent in line with ESFA regulations and the Nolan Principles of Public Life. Trustees work closely with our external auditors to ensure a robust annual review is conducted. The Audit Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee review the annual reports and have the opportunity to discuss any audit findings. The trust has started working with the DfE research teams to develop and improve the digital platforms and financial tools that they make available to the sector.</p> <p>At Academy/Business level: There are normally four fundamental submissions annually to the ESFA however during 2021-2022 there were five:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Report and Financial Statements. This report reviews the past 12 month's operations from a corporate position and includes an Internal Scrutiny report linked to governance. - Academies Accounts Return, - Budget Forecast Return Budget - School Resource Management Questionnaire - Building Collection Tool <p>Ofsted review the education standards within the Trust academies. Trustees are involved in all Ofsted inspections and have face-to-face inspection slots. The Trust has continued external quality assurance visits.</p> <p>We are also accountable as a church Trust to the Diocese of Leeds who frequently visit our schools and are invited to all Trust Board meetings. Our church schools are also inspected under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) framework.</p>	<p>All feedback from the bodies to which we are externally accountable is fed back to the full Trust Board, discussed in Board meetings and then used to inform future activity and priorities.</p> <p>For example, the performance of the Trust was reviewed by the Regional Schools Commissioner – the feedback letter from this was shared with Trustees and used to inform key governance and growth conversations.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Executive Officer ensure that all submitted returns are complete, accurate, consistent, timely and in compliance with ESFA's requirements.</p> <p>Feedback from the ESFA is usually conducted through the industry through revisions of the Academy Trust Handbook. These changes are summarised with actions required and communicated to the Board, governing body and Headteachers</p> <p>External inspection reports such as Ofsted reports are always shared with Trustees and frequently headteachers or senior Trust staff will attend Boards to report lessons learned.</p> <p>Where appropriate, feedback on new guidance from regulatory bodies will be used to refresh school and Trust level policies. The Trust finance policies for example are reviewed each year following the release of the Academy Trust Handbook and Annual Accounts Directive.</p> <p>Safeguarding policies are reviewed routinely in response to Keeping Children Safe in Education updates and other best practice recommendations, for example, this year to increase focus and response to harmful sexual behaviour.</p>

Trustees' Report (continued)

Stakeholder Group	Forms of Engagement	How this stakeholder group influenced the Board agenda and long term decision-making s172 (1)(a)
<p>Our Community and the local Environment s172(1)(d)(e)</p> <p>The local neighbourhood being local housing, businesses, and the environment.</p>	<p>Understanding the local communities our students live in is key to supporting their needs and ensuring they have the best chance to achieve their full potential. The Trust Board delegates community links to each local governing body and school as they understand best the communities they serve and hold strong links to the church, community, and local businesses. Any concerns, positive feedback or complaints trends are reported back to the Trustees at academy level through the half-termly CEO report.</p> <p>While school governing bodies do take the main lead in liaising and supporting community issues, where concerns are significant the Trust does get involved to support the school voice for example, actively supporting another school in the location of a new car park build where the original proposed location highlighted potential safeguarding and road safety concerns.</p> <p>Our Inclusion strategy aims to work with our communities and local families to build cohesive relationships understanding and celebrating our differences.</p>	<p>Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust has engaged with a public relations company to support communications out to the community when required as well as celebrating successes across the Trust within the Local Community.</p> <p>If trends or concerns in community communications are picked up these are discussed at Trust Board. Our community are informed of large projects or any events that may impact the local community and always have the opportunity to alert Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust to discuss concerns as well as the school.</p> <p>Websites and social media are regularly updated with latest news items and upcoming events.</p>

