

Trustees' Report (continued)

Section 172 (1) Statement for the Financial Year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023

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 table below 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 2023, the trust had 1,620 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 new "One Child, One Family, Where Everyone Matters" strategy is in its first year of a three-year strategy with the main emphasis being on the key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Safeguarding • BDAT People • Systems and Infrastructure • Inclusion • Pupil Engagement • Growth <p>The Board receives regular updates on progress against the Trust's strategic objectives including key performance recruitment and retention data. BDAT People, a sub-committee of the Board, focuses on staffing development across BDAT.</p> <p>BDAT People, our sister website," sets out the 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>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</p> <p>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 2022-23 we also increased the number of teacher trainee placements within our academies recruiting more Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and teaching trainees within our Trust. 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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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 specialists NPQs during 2022-23.</p> <p>Diversity and Wellbeing</p> <p>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 2022-23 the Trust focused on a MAT Inclusion and Diversity award which was successfully awarded. BDAT launched the Wellbeing Charter as part of the BDAT conference in October 2022. This Charter helps ensure that staff are appreciative of their own work life balance and mental health.</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 10,520 pupils during the financial year 2022-23 across our 19 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>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>Student voice, during 2022-23, continues to move forward with both secondary schools and primary schools engaged within the Trust. The "Bradford Student Summit" continues with 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. The students continue to engage officials with the topics that matter to them mental health, cost-of-living, and anti-racism through the Bradford Citizens project.</p> <p>Bradford Council's lead for Safety of Women and Girls has engaged with student voice at primary and secondary with those students involved in the wellbeing project. This will help inform Bradford Council's community strategies going forward. Belle Vue Girl's students are engaged with Bradford 2025 to produce a Digital Creative Project around STEM and ethics of social media.</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 2022-23 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)

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Our Suppliers s172(1)(c)(e) Provide goods and services on which we rely to deliver a quality education to our pupils.	<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>In the last 12 months Trustees have actively engaged in the procurement of several high value tender exercises for central services, including audit, payroll and HR services.</p>
Our Regulators s172(1)(c) This includes financial regulators such as the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the Department for Education and Regional Director and other bodies who hold the Trust to account such as Ofsted or the Diocese of Leeds.	<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 and Risk Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee review the annual reports and have the opportunity to discuss any audit findings.</p> <p>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 five fundamental submissions annually to the ESFA:</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 • Land and Building Collection Tool <p>Ofsted review the education standards within the Trust academies. Trustees are involved in all Ofsted inspections and have education 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>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 related policies (including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy and the Prevent policy) are reviewed routinely in response to statutory Keeping Children Safe in Education updates, non-statutory Department for Education guidance and other best practice recommendations. Training is provided to ensure that all stakeholders are knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. Safeguarding is an agenda item at every Local Governing Body meeting and on a termly basis at Trust Board level to allow further scrutiny and ensure accountability.</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 consultation of a school expansion. Immanuel College have consulted on the growth of their Post-16 and the requirements for a new building to support the expansion.</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. This was extremely useful during 2022-23 as Bradford Girls Grammar School joined the Trust and several consultation meetings were held with parents to provide an opportunity to discuss any issues with the Executive team.</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. Websites and social media are regularly updated with latest news items and upcoming events.</p>

