



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

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CEO: J Callow
Chair of Trust Board: S Tavener

15/10/2025

Minutes
An Daras Multi-Academy Trust Members
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 15th October 2025 at 12 noon at ADMAT Central Office

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Steve Tavener (Chair), Chris Marshall, Richard Watson, Clare Kendle (for Askel Veur) and Paul Stock (online for Eden)

In attendance: Jo Callow (CEO), Toni Martin (Governance Officer)

The Chair welcomed everyone and Jo Callow was congratulated on her permanent appointment as Trust CEO.

It is noted that RW completed Member training on 6th October 2025.

2. Declarations of Interest/Pecuniary Interests Relevant to this Agenda

Including annual submissions of declarations. No changes, except Eden who had a few minor changes; all capture on the interest register.

3. Approve Previous Minutes from General Meeting (12th March 2025)

Action: Contact the NGA consultant to find out why the Members were not consulted as part of the ERG and possibly make a recommendation to the NGA regarding this matter (TM). *NGA consultant contacted. Not speaking to the Members is not a standard feature of their approach. The decision to focus on the trust board was based on the trust situation and the focus of the review (driven by RDD's office and the trust). The consultant felt that as the Members meet twice a year and provide challenge as demonstrated in the minutes, that it was not a priority to speak with them. The trust expansion and the change in local governance arrangements to governor hubs led him to focus on these 2 layers of governance for this review.*

Members agreed the minutes and the Chair signed a copy.

4. Confidential Agenda Items

None.

5. Presentation of Accounts

The year end audit accounts as at 31 Aug 2024 were presented to the Members at the General Meeting on 12th March 2025 – see minutes from this meeting.

6. Appoint External Auditor 2025

Recommendation for external auditor for autumn 2026. The Board considered all the options; all three options can do the job, one is far too expensive and one we have used for 5 years including the

forthcoming 2025 audit, with a good working relationship. The Board feel it would be prudent to change and given how tight the finances are, strong consideration must be given to the cost. Griffin provided the cheapest quote and are suitable, but they are currently the internal auditor, so that will need to change next year, if they are appointed as external auditor. RW stated that finding a new internal auditor may be tricky as there seem to be less offering this service now. This was noted. The Board recommend to the Members to appoint Griffin as the external auditors for the 2025-2026 audit. This is based on cost and that it is prudent to change auditors from time to time.

Members agreed to appoint Griffin as the external auditor for the Autumn 2026 [covering the 2025-2026 academic year]

7. Brief An Daras MAT Strategic Update

CEO appointment confirmed – Jo Callow as of July 2025. The Members congratulated JC.

Ten out of 11 schools have had an Ofsted inspection in last 3 years, all good grades.

Foundation, phonics and year 4 maths all in line with national average. KS2 attainment is the focus as we are below national average and need to put attention to this.

Key Risks

(1) If the trust was to expand, KS2 data will affect this.

(2) Falling rolls and finance. Finance affects provision and staffing, which affects provision and data.

(3) Staff absence and the associated costs, workload and well-being.

At the last meeting, you had concerns about Callington and we discussed developments and monitoring at Callington, where are we at with this? ST explained the measures that have been taken and that it is a more positive picture now. JC explained the leadership responsibilities and the improvements that have been made. The Members thanked the trust for their hard work on this.

Is the data consistent across the trust, or are there differences in the schools? JC explained that it is different across all the schools and for very different reasons. Every school has its own challenges which might include mobility, high SEN numbers, staff absence and across the board funding is always tight. **Can we ask about reserves, are the Board content with what you have?** ST confirmed that the level has dropped but not through choice. There have been external factors such as pay rises and increase in NI payments that have drawn on them. We hope to build them up again, but this will be difficult in reality given the falling rolls (less funding) and the need to invest in interventions to improve achievement/data.

JC briefly explained the trust improvement priorities including improving data, further work on the curriculum, sustainability and looking at the structure of the schools to cope with falling rolls. **Under engagement and inclusion, you are focussing on SEND, do you have the funding to cope with that?** ST noted that funding is always tight and often paid retrospectively, but this is only for those in receipt of SEND funding. Our schools are very inclusive and take those with additional educational needs even if they are not funded, but it does make balancing resources tricky. **It is noted that you are redesigning and enhancing the trust website to improve digital presence, how do you plan to draw people to the website?** JC explained that most parents look at school websites not the trust one, but in terms of recruiting staff or further expansion, the trust website is the front door to the world so we need to ensure it is outward looking, portrays who we are and sells what we have to offer in an effective way.

Do you have any plans for further growth? There aren't many schools left in the area that aren't already part of a trust. At a meeting with the RDD's office in July, potential for growth is not on their agenda. They are pushing for collaboration between schools and trusts, which we are happy to do but it could be a double-edged sword. In addition to this, our focus is on managing finances/falling rolls and improving standards/data – consolidating where we are. Pre-school plans for Launceston

pre-school and WHA were discussed. There is funding for pre-school development and JC noted the opportunity for potential new pre-school at Princetown. ST queried that the Director of Education for Truro noted that all church schools are to be academised. It was confirmed that the intention is for all schools to be in a “family of schools” by 2025. Eden confirmed they have 14 stand alone schools, 14 schools in academy trusts and 12 schools in federations. **How is the Head’s management time versus teaching time being managed in terms of priorities on the improvement plan?** JC explained the many layers involved in supporting the schools and outline some of the plans

8. Any other Business

None.

9. Date of Next Meeting

General Meeting on 4th March 2026 at 12 noon in the central office/hybrid [this will include presentation of 24-25 accounts].

With no further business to be discussed, the meeting closed at 12.35pm

TJH Martin

ADMAT Governance Officer

Distribution List:

Chris Marshall – Member

Richard Watson – Member

Eden (Represented by Paul Stock) – Member

Askel Veur (Represented by Clare Kendle) – Member

Steve Tavener – Chair Board of Directors & Member

Jo Callow – CEO & Director