



Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

Minutes of a Meeting of the
Governing Board of Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools
30th March 2023, 16.30 at Hickling

Governing Board	Initials	Role	Present / Apologies / Absent
Rosie Booker	RB	Co-opted Governor	Present
Natalie Butcher	NB	Headteacher/Governor	Present
Angie Johnson (Chair)	AJ	Foundation Governor	Present
Martin Petersen	MP	Co-opted Governor	Present
Linda Russell	LR	Foundation Governor	Present
Jacqui Sinkins	JS	Staff Governor	Present
Josie Upton	JU	Parent Governor	Apologies
Sheila Watts	SW	LA Governor/Chair of Governors	Apologies
Also Present			
Justine Petersen	JP	Clerk	Present

1. Welcome & opening prayer	<p>AJ welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. The meeting opened with a moment of quiet reflection on the tragic suicide of Ruth Perry following an inadequate Ofsted judgement.</p> <p>This would be JS's last meeting as staff governor, and she will leave the Federation tomorrow. Governors thanked her for all she had done for the schools, for outcomes for the children, and for her support of others.</p>
2. Apologies & absence	Received and accepted from Josie Upton and Sheila Watts.
3. Declaration of Interests	<p>AJ invited governors to declare any business or pecuniary interests specifically relating to items on the agenda or that they had not already declared. None.</p>
4. Minutes of Previous FGB Meetings	The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7 th February 2023 were unanimously approved without amendment.
5. Matters Arising	<p>AJ has completed GDPR training. She has started the monitoring at Hickling, and she will also do Catfield. NB confirmed all staff have completed the first training course, and they are now undertaking the refresher. Action – AJ to monitor GDPR at Hickling and Catfield. SW has not yet monitored equality and diversity. Action – SW to monitor equality and diversity. RB has completed governor safeguarding training. AJ spoke with the environmental group at Catfield, and they will visit the school tomorrow. The minutes of the discussions around the cyber security themed audit were submitted to County.</p> <p>MP has monitored staff voice, and results are broadly in line with the last survey. Engagement was much stronger, and he will post a link to the survey on Governorhub. Action – MP to post link to staff survey on Governorhub. RB and JU have not yet done pupil voice, but this has been a capacity issue. Action – RB and JU to monitor pupil voice.</p> <p>The Federation will have new insurance from next month at the start of the financial year, and NB will forward the documentation to SW. SW will check that ransomware attacks are covered. Gov: Do we have insurance? Yes, but NB needs to find the specific information. Action – NB to forward new insurance documents to SW. SW to check for coverage for</p>

	<p>ransomware attacks.</p> <p>AJ monitored safeguarding and the Single Central Record. NB has been advised that governors should monitor it termly, and it needs to show a governor has signed it off, and not a member of staff. Gov: It does not have to be done termly. NB stressed this is best practice. Gov: Governors need to ensure it is being done by the school. The DfE has stated it is not the responsibility of governors to do it, but they should check it. The team in school is very small, and only NB has oversight. It would be useful to have governors checking it regularly. Gov: So governors need to monitor to ensure it has been regularly checked? Yes, via a meeting with NB. Governors could look at recent recruitment and whether the required checks have been completed. It was mentioned during the Hickling Ofsted, but NB was unsure whether it would be included in the report. It was agreed that governors would ask to check the Single Central Record when they visit school for other purposes. Staff would be asked to explain any gaps, such as with recent recruitment.</p>
<p>6. Committee Updates</p>	<p>Both Committee meetings were deferred because of the Ofsted inspection at Hickling. It was agreed that the A&S Committee would meet on Tuesday 9th May, 17:30. The R&P Committee already has a meeting planned for that date.</p> <p>Networking with Other Schools The Federation's work with St Benet's is going from strength to strength. The new CUSP curriculum will be fully embedded in September. There will be training on the inset after Easter, including in-house training, training with other schools and with a CUSP specialist. 2/8 schools in the North Norfolk group have been accepted, and they will join St Benet's in September.</p> <p>The networking is very positive for workload, wellbeing and raising standards. The Federation can access resources and CPD with likeminded heads and staff. There will be extensive enrichment opportunities, such as all the schools camping at Happisburgh during the unit on coastal erosion. There will be economies of scale and benefits to staff morale.</p> <p>NB attended the heads meeting last week, and it was very positive. The heads conference took place this week, and future opportunities were discussed. Not all eight schools will be in St Benet's by September, but it has been agreed that they will continue to work as a group as long as all are heading in that direction. The Headteacher from Worsted visited yesterday to look at the curriculum. NB visited Worstead last term. NB met with Karen Hutchison, and she is very supportive of increased collaboration with St Benet's and the North Norfolk group.</p> <p>Gov: Should governors start to engage with the other Governing Boards? All present agreed this was a good idea. All would consider any ideas and post on Governorhub with a view to having something in place before the next meeting. Action – Governors to post ideas about engaging with other FGBs and post on Governorhub.</p> <p>NB will circulate videos on how to monitor the CUSP curriculum. This would be discussed at the next meeting of the A&S Committee. Action – NB to circulate videos on how to monitor the CUSP curriculum. Clerk to add to next A&S agenda.</p>
<p>7. Governing Board</p>	<p>Stakeholder Engagement NB has informed staff of the pending staff governor vacancy, and two have expressed an interest so far. The Federation has previously used a model where staff have been co-opted. This worked well and could be considered again if more than one nomination is received. Staff who are interested could be invited to observe a meeting.</p> <p>Having more parent governors would make a real difference, but letters and emails are not having an impact. Events are starting to grow again after COVID, and there are more opportunities for face-to-face discussions. Gov: Does Emma Barker have any contacts?</p>

	<p>Not as far as NB is aware, but she will ask. Governors were mindful that Sutton and Hickling are not represented on the Governing Board, but there are two parents from Catfield. The new Deputy Headteacher will lead meet and greets during the first week back after Easter, and governors were welcome to attend.</p> <p>Governor Monitoring Reports SW had not yet monitored equality and diversity.</p> <p>Governor Training All present confirmed their individual training logs are accurate.</p>
<p>8. Finance</p>	<p>Budget Governors have not yet discussed Revision 3, and the new budget has not been set.</p> <p>NB provided an update. The budget has taken time to unpick, but NB now feels empowered. There have been many changes in staffing, and those who have left have not been replaced. NB was aware of the pupil number forecasts, and she was keen to avoid a restructure. JS and EB will leave, and the roles will be merged. The new cost has been factored into revision 3. Sutton is unlikely to have separate classes for Yr1 and Yr2 next year. NB will confirm this after Easter when the new YrR numbers are known.</p> <p>Revision 3 is much healthier than revision 2, and there is unlikely to be a significant difference between revision 3 and budget setting.</p> <p>NB and SW have started to look at the new budget. Staffing and CUSP resources have been included, and much of the investment needed to bring Catfield out of RI is already in revision 3.</p> <p>NB reminded governors that the Diocese applied for TSO funding for the North Norfolk group. Karen Hutchison has advised that more is available for Catfield for the summer term, because of the RI judgement. This equates to another 10 days of support. It must be done through a Trust, and NB will discuss with St Benet's. She would like the funding to go towards work with a CUSP specialist.</p> <p>The new budget will be available for the next meeting. NB will draft two budgets – one with two classes at Sutton, and one with one – and Governors will decide the best way forward. Parent perception would need to be managed, but mixed classes work well at other schools in the Federation.</p> <p>Gov: Have there been any changes in pupil numbers? Catfield is stable but Sutton and Hickling have dropped. This is an issue across Norfolk, but it has an impact on the budget.</p>
<p>9. Cyber Security Themed Audit</p>	<p>There is no update, and the minutes evidencing discussions were forwarded to County. AJ and LR have completed cyber security training. AJ also has a place booked on a course at the end of April, and she will circulate the details rather than lose the place. All courses are fully booked.</p> <p>Action – AJ to circulate details of cyber security course space.</p>
<p>10. Headteacher Report</p>	<p>Gov: There are concerns about attendance at Sutton? Yes, at Hickling and at Sutton. Attendance has dipped slightly at Catfield, but it is not of particular concern.</p> <p><i>Confidential discussion.</i></p> <p>The Easter fayre at Hickling was excellent, and £900 was raised. It was very well attended.</p> <p>Gov: How are the stay and play sessions going? They are going very well. They are well attended, including by some new families. One child had left to go to another school, and the family has now brought them back into the Federation. NB has liaised with the toddler groups, and she has offered the use of the school halls free of charge. A small minority of parents had requested a change to the times of the school day. NB sent out a survey, and there was little support for this.</p> <p>Gov: Has this been included in a newsletter?</p>

	<p>Yes. There have been many misconceptions among parents, such as a rumour that all three schools will combine. NB has allayed any concerns.</p> <p>The PTA has picked up at all three schools. There is a new Facebook page for publicity, and flyers have been circulated. This has brought people into the schools.</p> <p>NB stressed the need to promote the unique selling points of the schools, such as Forest Schools, Federation Days, trips and visits, parental support with special days. There will be a dance show down at St George's Theatre using PE Premium. This is starting to get out into the community, but NB does not believe it will positively impact on numbers for next year.</p> <p>Pre-school numbers are high at Sutton, but Hickling is looking low.</p> <p><i>Confidential discussion.</i></p> <p>The Ofsted inspection at Hickling was very positive, but it was also fair. NB is very proud of everyone involved. It was a more thorough inspection than at Catfield. Every member of staff was spoken to about safeguarding, whereas no one was at Catfield. NB was not asked about her wellbeing at either inspection, but the staff were asked. The Hickling inspectors struggled to find areas for development, and the areas selected had already been included in plans before the inspection. The school is in a very strong position.</p> <p>Gov: Is it possible to give feedback to Ofsted? Yes, but it must be done within 24 hours.</p> <p>Gov: Did you give feedback for Catfield? No, NB did not think to do it at the time. Everyone involved was exhausted.</p> <p>LR stressed the inspection at Hickling was very different to that at Catfield. The HMI as very committed to the job and to the children, and she had not long left her role as a headteacher. The inspection was very thorough. NB had been concerned Ofsted would say the autumn term was not good enough, but they said it could not have been managed any better. They could see the exceptional step up from January. The story could be told through the books, and the children did not miss out.</p> <p>Governors considered the feedback to be exceptional considering the challenges Hickling has faced this year. Everyone involved should feel very proud. NB stressed the Head of School at Hickling was phenomenal. She was at a funeral on the day before the inspection, and she came into school after this to prepare. She wanted to show the school at its very best.</p> <p>Governors were already aware of the staffing changes listed in the Headteacher Report. EB will continue to support the SENCo during the summer term. Parents were initially concerned that the new Deputy Head appointment would mean she was out of class, but they have been reassured that she will continue to teach.</p> <p><i>Confidential discussion.</i></p>
11. Federation Development Plan and SEF	Covered above.
12. Future of the Federation Moving Forward	<p>SW and NB attended a due diligence meeting with St Benet's to discuss the budget, and it was very positive. They explained the current position, and the next step is to send the SFVS and any building monitoring through. It will then go to consultation, and the Federation will need to do this for all three schools.</p> <p>NB would welcome any support from governors, particularly around land matters. She is not aware of any significant concerns around the buildings. Conversation at Christmas is possible, but it is more likely to be at Easter. The DfE is keen for the St Benet's hub to grow.</p>
13. Policy Approval	None for this meeting.

14. Future dates of school events	All dates are available on the website, and NB highlights any specific events on Governorhub. Governors are welcome to attend the CUSP inset day on 17 th April.
15. AOB	<p>Gov: Is the Swallowtail Facebook page an official page? No, but this will be resolved. NB was keen to ensure the flyers went out quickly. Gov: Facebook guidelines are strict, and the page could be removed. Staff have been tasked with unpacking this during the inset after Easter.</p> <p>RB gave an update on the data. It is looking very positive overall, and it shows positive trends in forecasts. Where it appears that data is dropping, this is due to new children being added, and the numbers are skewed. All should be praised for the progress overall. The data is very detailed, and NB tracks vulnerable groups, including Pupil Premium. NB will analyse the data termly and meet with RB. Gov: How do we moderate the data? It is the school's tracking, and it is not tracked against any standards. Staff are becoming much more confident. It will be moderated internally, but it cannot be done externally, although this will change with the St Benet's offer. A shared curriculum across schools naturally creates opportunities for moderation.</p> <p>AJ thanked NB for her work this term. She thanked JS for all she has done for the Federation, and governors wished her well for the future.</p>
16. Date and Time of Next Meeting	Tuesday 23 rd May 2023, 16:30 at Catfield.
17. Summary Statement	It has been a positive term for all in the Federation. Staff and children are flying, and the momentum will continue. There was much activity throughout the term, and staff are encouraged and motivated. The development plan has not been updated recently, and governor are looking forward to seeing the changes. The ability to be fluid and to keep moving in the right direction is a gift.
18. Closing Moment with Prayer	LR closed the meeting with a prayer.

With no further business the meeting finished at 17:55

Signed by the Chair of Governors as a true record of the meeting:

Date:

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