



## Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

Minutes of a Meeting of the  
Governing Board of Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools  
13<sup>th</sup> December 2021, 16.30 via Zoom

Governing Board	Initials	Role	Present / Apologies / Absent
Natalie Butcher	NB	Headteacher/Governor	Present
Angie Johnson	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	Present
Rosie Brookes	RB	Co-opted Governor	Present
Emma Barker	EB	Co-opted Governor	Present
<b>Also Present</b>			
Jo Wheadon	JW	Business Manager	Present (Items 1-5, 8)
Justine Petersen	JP	Educator Solutions Clerking Service	Present

<b>1. Welcome &amp; opening prayer</b>	SW welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. The meeting opened with a moment of reflection.
<b>2. Apologies &amp; absence</b>	Received and accepted from Josie Upton. RB had advised she would be late due to a prior commitment.
<b>3. Declaration of Interests</b>	SW invited governors to declare any business or pecuniary interests specifically relating to items on the agenda or that they had not already declared. None declared.
<b>4. Minutes of previous FGB meeting</b>	The minutes of the meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 were unanimously approved subject to one amendment – the date of the next meeting was incorrect. NB will ensure FGB minutes are uploaded to the website.
<b>5. Matters arising</b>	Governors reviewed the Action Log. AJ has monitored the Single Central Record. There were no overall concerns, but there was reference to one person not being 'signed up'. This was probably someone who had arranged to complete a DBS but was unable to do so because of COVID. <b>Action – NB to address minor issue in Single Central Record.</b> All other actions were marked as complete or were covered on the agenda.
<b>6. Committee updates – 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b>	<b>Achievement &amp; Standards</b> No comments or concerns.  <b>Resources &amp; Premises</b> No comments or concerns.  <b>Networking with Other Schools</b> No update.
<b>7. Governing Board</b>	<b>Plan for Stakeholder Engagement</b> Pupil voice will be taken termly. Work has been effective so far, and NB supports its continuation. It can be done remotely if necessary. <b>Action – Pupil engagement to be added to the agenda of the second meeting in every term.</b> AJ informed governors that a village questionnaire took place last week to get feedback on what villagers wanted to see in terms of amenities going forward. It would be useful to undertake something similar with the children at Catfield. It was agreed this would be done in early January. <b>Action - AJ to liaise with JS regarding questionnaire on local amenities and the future of the village to be undertaken with children at Catfield.</b>

**Gov: Do we have any idea of input in terms of Parent View?**

No. engagement with parents and staff is difficult currently, and questionnaires may not give an idea of true engagement.

**Gov: There was positive feedback regarding the phonics programme, and this was a major piece of work involving engagement with parents across the entire Federation. Is there a way to print questions from Parent View? Could this link to a parents evening when the parents are in school?**

It is not yet known whether parents' evenings will take place in school next term. In terms of staff workload, an online questionnaire is preferable. It was agreed that RB and EB would draft a list of questions and forward them to NB, with the view to being sent out in January.

**Action – RB and EB to draft a list of questions for parent questionnaire and forward to NB.**

Governors will consider how to work with staff as stakeholders. It is difficult to predict what will happen in the spring, but a governor presence in school would be welcomed. It would need to be done safely and within COVID guidelines.

Parent governors will write monitoring reports for any Christmas events attended.

**Action - Parent governors to write monitoring reports for any Christmas events attended.**

Governors will consider how to use social media as a means of engagement moving forward. It would be a useful way of sharing information.

**Action – Governors to consider how to use social media to promote engagement.**

### **Governor Monitoring**

#### **Update from SIAMS Governor:**

LR advised that SIAMS inspections resumed on 11<sup>th</sup> October. It is now under a national system to ensure consistency. The local Diocese will still be responsible for advice on developing the Christian ethos and character of the school, and for training.

SIAMS intend to publish an annual report. This will be useful in terms of highlighting key themes and trends in church schools.

There is little change in the inspection process; the 7 Strands will still be the focus but with the addition of an overarching inspection question. LR is confident that the Federation's vision sits well with the Church of England vision for education. It meets the needs of the local children and supports staff development.

Children are not expected to explain the vision of the school, but the impact of the vision on children is critical.

**Gov: Is that a recent change?**

Yes. Children are not expected to explain it, but staff and governors are.

Sutton is likely to be inspected this academic year, although inspections are temporarily paused. The inspector will consider the actions the school has taken in light of its vision, and they will request a 2-page summary of the Self-Evaluation. There is no need to refer to previous inspections, and the focus must be on the impact.

The FDP is linked to the vision, and wellbeing and support are embedded. The schools must show they have lived this vision during the pandemic.

LR met with the RE Lead, and they will forward the updated Self-Evaluation form for Sutton.

LR suggested it be reviewed termly by the Governing Board.

**Action – SIAMS Self-Evaluation to be reviewed termly. Clerk to add to agendas.**

The RE Lead will present to the next meeting of the A&S Committee, and LR will meet with her again in February.

Governors can support the process by ensuring all monitoring reports comment on the vision. The form has been amended to reflect this.

#### **Update from Safeguarding Governor Including Review of Single Central Record:**

Covered above.

#### **Update from GDPR Governor:**

AJ will monitor GDPR with JW. She forwarded a document but did not receive a response.

**Action – AJ and JW to monitor GDPR.**

#### **Outcome of Skills Audit**

There are no obvious areas of concern, and the Board is well covered in all areas as a collective. Some governors have highlighted specific areas where they would like to increase their knowledge and expertise, and they will address this on an individual level.

**Gov: Is there funding available to support governor training outside of Norfolk? The cost of some courses is high, but they would be invaluable.**

	<p>There is no funding from the LA for external opportunities. The Federation sets aside money for training, and this could be extended to governors.</p> <p><b>Governor Training</b> Governors were reminded to add details of any training attended to their personal training record on Governorhub.</p>
<p><b>8. Budget/Finance</b></p>	<p><b>Budget Approval</b> The budget meeting took place on 29<sup>th</sup> November. It was very detailed. SEN, PE Premium and Pupil Premium funding were updated to include actual allocations. The Finance Officer will investigate Universal Infant Free School Meals, as he felt the amount was too low. There was additional income for breakfast club, and a slight increase in donations to the School Fund. Trip contributions were updated. COVID recovery funding is ringfenced, and NB must report on how it is spent in the Pupil Premium Report. The Federation will receive National Tutoring Programme funding, but only if a member of staff undertakes the training. The first year's allocation will be 75%, the second year 50%, and the final year 25%, with the Federation having to make up the balance in each year. Several hours of training are required, and NB is keen to balance the additional funding against staff workload. She will unpick this over the Christmas break.</p> <p>SW advised that there is a major difference in staffing costs between revisions 1 and 2. Staffing has dropped by £75k, and this was discussed at length in the budget meeting. There are two main reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher pay award had been built in at 3% going forward. There was no national pay increase this year, so the 3% was returned to the budget.</li> <li>• One member of staff was due to return from maternity leave, and her salary was included in the budget along with the salary to cover her position while she was away. She has since decided not to return.</li> </ul> <p>Together, these changes totalled c. £71k. The remaining £4k difference was the result of smaller staffing changes.</p> <p><b>Gov: The budget notes state that the forecast number on roll indicates a reduction year on year. That seems concerning.</b></p> <p>There was a small reduction at Sutton this year, and another is expected in September 2022. The cohorts are very small, and two children can make a real difference. NB stressed that it is based on forecasting. A more accurate picture will be available for the next budget revision. KS2 at Catfield tend to pick up additional children.</p> <p>SW proposed to accept the budget as presented. This was seconded by EB and unanimously approved. <b>Action – SW to confirm approval of budget in email to County Finance Officer and query a £700 difference in the capital amount.</b></p> <p>SW advised that the potential leadership restructure now has a different basis because the staffing figures in the budget have changed. <b>Gov: When is the next meeting of the Leadership Restructure Working Group?</b> MP advised that a date has not been set. He will contact NB after the meeting to arrange, but he is mindful of the pressures SLT are under in the current circumstances.</p>
<p><b>9. Headteacher Report</b></p>	<p>NB advised that data and targets have been included for the first time since the start of the pandemic. <b>Gov: The report mentions a flexi-schooling situation due to CEV. What does that mean?</b> Clinically extremely vulnerable. <b>Gov: Within the context of the current situation, is flexi-schooling being closely monitored?</b> NB advised that flexi-schooling was recommended by the Attendance Team. Both families want their children to be in school, but it is unsafe for them to be in all the time. There is rigorous monitoring and work is uploaded remotely. Two welfare calls are placed each week, including a request to speak to the child on each occasion. Parents must agree to these terms before a flexi-school request is granted. It can also be retracted at any time if staff have concerns. <b>Gov: Has there been an impact on attendance at Catfield and Hickling?</b> Yes, it counts against attendance. There are fewer children on roll at Hickling, therefore the</p>

	<p>impact on attendance data is skewed. Governors commented that this is a strong example of how the Federation is supporting families through the pandemic, and it is living its Christian values. NB advised that one child has not been in school for several weeks, and the whole class will have a Zoom session with her so she can see her friends and teachers. Childrens emotional welfare and wellbeing is supported as well as their academic needs.</p> <p><b>Gov: What is the position with school meals at Catfield? Uptake is very low.</b> Uptake is good at Hickling, but the cohorts are very different. Children at Catfield are not as exposed to fruit and vegetables, and they are 'fussy eaters'. <b>Gov: It is important for their overall wellbeing. Is there a solution?</b> It is a matter for Norse in terms of anything they can do to make the meals more appealing. In some cases, there is lack of parental aspiration about what the children will eat.</p> <p>The results of the November phonics check showed an improvement to 70-75% since September. Over half the children got full marks, and the work of the English lead combined with the Jolly Phonics scheme have had a real impact. The 20% increase is consistent across the schools over that 2-month period. Governors congratulated all involved.</p> <p><b>Gov: Could you talk through the targets? You have high expectations for phonics except for at Sutton?</b> Yes, but this is related to the needs of the cohort. The targets are challenging and aspirational, but they are achievable given the progress that has already been seen since September.</p> <p><b>Gov: Could you explain the Diversity Carousel?</b> JS provided an update. Many schools are involved, and diversity in gender is a focus for the Federation. The younger children at Catfield had a day of dressing up as what they would like to be when they grow up. This broke down some gender stereotypes. They have been considering things boys and girls can and cannot do. KS2 children have learned about 4 prominent women from history. They created artwork and portraits and wrote poetry. Governors were shown examples online.</p>
<p><b>10. Federation Development Plan</b></p>	<p>NB advised that the FDP is almost complete. She had hoped to upload it to Governorhub before the meeting, but there have been high levels of staff absence this week and other priorities took precedence. She is keen to complete it before the end of term for the benefit of SLT wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Gov: Are governor comments required for the comments section of the FDP?</b> Yes, governor monitoring needs to be included. It was agreed that EB would collate monitoring undertaken and add to FDP. <b>Action – All governors to inform EB of monitoring activities completed. NB to forward FDP to EB.</b></p> <p>Governors noted that the leavers party took place over the school holidays, and this shows the commitment of staff. They requested this be added to the FDP. <b>Action – NB to add leavers celebration in school holidays to FDP.</b> The schools are managing to continue with nativities. Staff are not being complacent, but nativities are really valued, and they are important for the wellbeing of the children. Additional performances will take place so parents can be socially distanced. Every child in the Federation will have the opportunity for parents to come in and watch their performance. Governors watched the online feed from the Cathedral. They were impressed with the childrens behaviour and singing. Every child in the Federation has been on a school trip this term.</p>
<p><b>11. Future of the Federation Moving Forward</b></p>	<p>Dot Lenton, Diocese Support Officer, visited NB to talk through the proposed restructure and future plans. She asked whether the Governing Board had considered joining a MAT. SW informed governors that it would be good practice to consider this again, as not all governors have had the opportunity of listening to a Diocesan MAT presentation. AJ attended an online session this term, and it may be recorded and available offline. It was agreed to consider the matter again in the spring. <b>Action – AJ to check whether Diocesan MAT presentation is available to watch offline.</b></p> <p><b>Gov: Could the Federation potentially join a MAT other than those operated by the Diocese?</b> Not in Norfolk, although it has been done in other parts of the country.</p>

<p><b>12. Update from Working Party on Pre School Provision on Sutton Site</b></p>	<p>EB provided an update. She has received confirmation via the Chair of the Committee that the Pre-school will close next summer. County is also aware. The Chair is very supportive of the Federation moving forward with some sort of pre-school provision. She has not yet informed pre-school parents of the closure, and she has asked to include a sentence in the letter regarding the Federation providing future provision.</p> <p>This is difficult, but the Federation does not want to make promises it cannot keep. NB has a meeting with the Head of Early Years Provision at County on 18<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the feasibility of having a pre-school on the Sutton site.</p> <p>Governors were strongly of the opinion that the Federation should support the parents and the village as a whole, and they are interested in running a provision, but there are a large number of practicalities and operational issues that cannot be decided until further information is known and discussions have taken place with County. This could be included in the letter.</p> <p><b>Gov: What would be the means to update parents moving forward?</b></p> <p>EB stressed that the relationship with the Pre School Committee is very positive, and they would be willing to update parents with any information moving forward.</p> <p><b>Action – EB to draft paragraph for Sutton Pre-School parent letter and forward to NB.</b></p>
<p><b>13. Policy Approval</b></p>	<p>The following policies were unanimously approved without amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback and Marking</li> <li>• Online Safety</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> <li>• RE</li> <li>• Visits</li> </ul> <p><b>Gov: It was noted in the past that we did not always follow the Feedback and Marking Policy. Do we follow it now? Has COVID had an impact?</b></p> <p>It was a significant piece of work, but it needed to be done. Considerations around staff workload mean that marking should not be an onerous task. This is a stripped back version of the former policy, and it focuses on the impact for the children. It is new, so it has not yet been applied. COVID has knocked consistency around marking, and the policy is a useful way to realign.</p> <p><b>Gov: Can we be confident the Online Safety Policy is being followed?</b></p> <p>Yes, NB is confident it is being adhered to. There is a new Online Safety Lead, and she has completed training.</p> <p><b>Gov: Is the Performance Management Policy the standard County policy?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Gov: Has the Business Manager completed the training referred to in the Visits Policy?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Gov: Do we have the other policies it mentions?</b></p> <p>Yes, it was part of the recent health and safety check. The Visits Policy is the Evolve model policy.</p>
<p><b>14. Future dates of school events</b></p>	<p>Dates are available on the website.</p> <p>The carol concert for the older children at Catfield will take place at the church.</p> <p>Christingle took place outside to enable parents to attend.</p> <p>All children will visit their local church before Christmas.</p>
<p><b>15. Any Other Business</b></p>	<p>None.</p>
<p><b>16. Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p>	<p>Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022, 16.30</p>
<p><b>17. Summary Statement</b></p>	<p>Governors are considering the future and ways forward. They are outward-looking, and keen to ensure the Federation does not stagnate. They are supportive of local communities and parents. There are strong examples of the schools living their Christian vision and values. Governors feel pride when they reflect upon what the Federation has achieved this year.</p> <p>Governors thanked NB for all she had done this term. NB thanked governors for their continued support.</p> <p><i>NB and JS left the meeting at 18:03.</i></p>
<p><b>18. Outcome of</b></p>	<p>Performance management took place with an external advisor. The Committee was satisfied that</p>

<b>Headteacher Performance Management</b>	NB had met her targets, and the evidence provided was exceptionally strong. It has been a particularly difficult year, and NB has worked tirelessly for the children, the staff and families. New objectives have been set for next year, and they are closely linked to the Federation's development and to SIAMS. AJ proposed awarding one salary increment. Governors voted unanimously in favour. SW will complete the relevant form and forward to County.
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With no further business the meeting finished at 18:07

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

Date:

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