



Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

Minutes of a Meeting of the
Governing Board of Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools
7th February 2023, 16.30 at Sutton

Governing Board	Initials	Role	Present / Apologies / Absent
Rosie Booker	RB	Co-opted Governor	Present
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	Present
Sheila Watts	SW	LA Governor/Chair of Governors	Present
Also Present			
Justine Petersen	JP	Clerk	Present

1. Welcome & opening prayer	SW welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. The meeting opened with a moment of quiet reflection on the discussions to take place.
2. Apologies & absence	None.
3. Declaration of Interests	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 were declared.
4. Minutes of Previous FGB Meetings	The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 13 th December 2022 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 19 th January 2023 were unanimously approved without amendment.
5. Matters Arising	<p>GDPR has not yet been monitored at Hickling and Catfield. Sutton was monitored in the summer term.</p> <p>Action – AJ to monitor GDPR at Hickling and Catfield. SW will monitor equality and diversity after the budget meeting on 23rd February.</p> <p>Action – SW to monitor equality and diversity. SW will print and sign confidential minutes from previous meetings. All have confirmed their declarations on Governorhub except for Jo Nutbeam. RB will complete safeguarding training. SW has done so since the last meeting</p> <p>Action – RB to complete safeguarding training.</p> <p>AJ monitored safeguarding and the Single Central Record. Gov: Were there any actions or concerns arising? A few minor issues were rectified at the time. AJ asked NB to check that the new version of the document is being used. There is confusion over whether it is part of the role of governors to check the Single Central Record, but AJ always does so as part of her monitoring. Governors were strongly of the opinion that it should be checked robustly. It is monitored by NB, JS and the school secretaries, and AJ monitored it just prior to the Catfield Ofsted. This is a time of transition from when it was being managed by the School Business Manager, and the Federation is making new staffing appointments.</p> <p>AJ will monitor Pupil Premium this month. NB will forward the minutes to County to show discussions around the cyber security themed audit. Gov: Does the Federation have insurance that will cover a ransomware attack? Action – NB to forward insurance details to SW. SW to check cover for ransomware attack.</p>

	All other actions were complete or were covered on the agenda.
6. Committee Updates	<p>No committees have met this term. The decision was taken to cancel the Resources and Premises Committee meeting because the budget and SFVS were not available at that time. The budget meeting will take place on 23rd February. It will be discussed at the R&P meeting on 14th March. The SFVS has been circulated electronically, and SW is awaiting any comments or feedback from governors. It will be submitted before the deadline.</p> <p>Networking with Other Schools KS2 writing moderation will take place with Ludham in March. Subject leader networks are being held for maths, English, SLT and SEND. They are looking at the journey to maths mastery, creating support for teachers and developing training for TAs. Staff can visit other schools. The English Lead is attending the English subject lead network on developing the English curriculum and progression. The SENCOs are discussing the challenges around SEND and funding. JS attends the SLT network around coaching, supporting staff and bringing excellence to teaching. There is a shared approach to instruction. SLT from several schools are working together to develop practice.</p> <p>NB visited Worstead for a curriculum review day, and the Headteacher at Worstead will visit the Federation next month. He and NB have started to discuss how the schools could together moving forward, and NB will arrange for staff to visit Worstead to share experiences of Yrs1-2.</p> <p>The Federation has the option to purchase a highly discounted subscription to CUSP through TSIO funding. It focuses on the principles behind good teaching and learning, and it provides a structure to underpin lessons. NB has seen it working at Acle, and it is very strong on aspirations and standards. The Federation will do this with similar sized schools and share best practice. It will raise standards while sharing the workload. It will be fully implemented by September following trials in the summer term.</p>
7. Governing Board	<p>Update on Membership and Recruitment Plan Discussions around recruitment would be on pause while the Federation moves forward with St Benet's.</p> <p>Stakeholder Engagement MP will monitor staff voice via a survey next half term. It will be done electronically to encourage engagement, using the same questions as last year for comparison purposes. The deadline would be the middle of the half term so as not to add to staff workload. Action – MP to forward staff survey questions to NB.</p> <p>Pupil voice would be taken around RHSE, and tied to wider pupil voice about safety and wellbeing. Governors suggested the new School Council at Catfield devise a questionnaire. Hickling does not have a school council because the school is so small, and Sutton is in the process of establishing one. Governors could attend a School Council meeting and talk to the children at Hickling. RB and JU will arrange with NB's support. Action – RB and JU to arrange pupil voice via School Councils.</p> <p>Parent voice was gained at Catfield during Ofsted, but there was a very short window to complete the survey. The parent governor vacancies have been publicised in the newsletter, but no expressions of interest have been received. The PTA at Catfield is now more active, and others are starting to take off. Sutton and Hickling should be represented on the Governing Board.</p> <p>Gov: What are we doing out in the community? A curriculum spotlight has been added to the newsletter to show the work being done around curriculum leadership. Stay and Play sessions will take place fortnightly across the settings to encourage more pre-</p>

	<p>school children to join. Sessions have been planned until July, and bookings are already being made. The key selling points of the Federation, such as Forest Schools, will be emphasised. There is a Swallowtail Facebook page, and the schools are active on every village group.</p> <p>Gov: Could the school link with the environmental group in Catfield? Lots is being done in the village, and they could involve the children. All present agreed this was a good idea. Action – AJ to contact environmental group in Catfield.</p> <p>Gov: Do we have an eco-team? No, but this is something to consider moving forward.</p> <p>AJ informed governors that raw sewerage is spilling into Catfield Fen, impacting on biodiversity. It could be from several properties, and the school was contacted because of the recent septic tank installation. Dye testing has shown it is very unlikely to be coming from the school.</p> <p>Gov: How are the churches getting involved with the schools? The Vicar attends Sutton regularly, and they came to Harvest Festival and Christingle at Catfield. The school took part in the Christmas tress festival. It is inviting the church to be involved in the schools, but there is little going in the other direction. Sutton Methodist Chapel has recently closed.</p> <p>Governor Monitoring Reports LR monitored the Catfield nativity and the Federation Day, and her reports were uploaded to Governorhub. She reminded governors it was the first Federation Day since the pandemic, and it was wonderful. There was real positivity from the children, and they interacted well with their peers from other settings. The day was based around vision, and the coming together for worship was a highlight. It was good for the younger children at Sutton and Hickling to be with KS2, and the older children were introducing themselves to their younger peers. Poems have since been shared across the Federation on Zoom, and many children were pointing out friends they had met from the other schools. Another Federation Day will take place before Easter.</p> <p>Gov: Is any further monitoring needed at this time? NB highlighted curriculum monitoring, but this would be picked up by the A&S Committee.</p> <p>Governor Training SW reminded all governors to ensure any training is added to their logs.</p>
8. Finance	<p>The budget was deferred to the next meeting of the R&P Committee.</p> <p>NB and SW met to consider the latest RAG report. Many areas have progressed. They identified areas that remain outstanding, and a plan is in place to address them.</p>
9. Cyber Security Themed Audit	<p>NB shared the audit at the last meeting. The minutes have now been approved and NB will submit them as soon as possible.</p> <p>Action – NB to submit minutes re cyber security themed audit. AJ and LR have completed cyber security training.</p>
10. Headteacher Report	<p>NB's report was circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors are aware of pupil numbers, and they have comparison figures from last year. Sutton is particularly low, and there are implications for the budget. This is a universal issue across Norfolk.</p> <p>Attendance is consistent across all three schools. This has not been the case in the past. NB not asked about attendance during the inspection at Catfield.</p> <p>There has been a significant reduction in the number of suspensions this academic year, and a reduction in overall behaviour incidents since Christmas.</p> <p>Staffing was covered at the Extraordinary FGB meeting on 19th January. Lucy Amiss has been appointed as the new Senior Teacher at Catfield. She has shown exceptional leadership capacity through her early years work, and this is an exciting new step for</p>

	<p>her. She will be a strong appointment.</p> <p>Gov: Has there been interest in the Deputy Headteacher post? Yes, there are strong candidates and interviews will take place tomorrow.</p> <p><i>Confidential discussion.</i></p> <p>County has decided to keep the PAN at Sutton at 25.</p>
11. Federation Development Plan and SEF	<p>Many areas have been achieved, and others are progressing significantly. Cluster writing moderation is amber, but it will take place soon. Governors are confident the plan is moving forward.</p> <p>The Hickling SEF has been updated, and the school is moving forward with the Ofsted areas for development.</p> <p>Gov: What about the church SEFs? NB will meet with the RE Lead tomorrow. Live information and impact will be added.</p>
12. Future of the Federation Moving Forward	<p>SW informed St Benet's of the outcome of the Extraordinary FGB meeting on 19th January. St Benet's have stressed the need to understand how the falling birth rates are impacting on the schools, and they have suggested a meeting. This is not a surprise. The change in pupil numbers was included in the budget revision sent to Howard Nelson, but nothing else was changed.</p> <p>Gov: So, what was sent to St Benet's was not the accurate position? No, it shows the reduced numbers, but it does not account for the staffing reduction and changes in SLT. It was agreed that SW would suggest the latest budget information be sent to St Benet's after the budget meeting, when accurate figures would be available.</p> <p>NB advised that of the eight schools in the North Norfolk group, two have consulted and agreed to join St Benet's, and the other three will go to consultation in the next few weeks. The Swallowtail schools have not yet taken that step. St Benet's will carefully consider the order in which schools should join, and NB was unsure whether the Federation would be seen as one school or three. In terms of timelines, those who have already confirmed are likely to join in September. If the Federation consults soon, conversion will probably be around December or January. St Benet's are prioritising the North Norfolk network of schools in terms of growth. There is vulnerability there, and it about securing stability.</p> <p>Gov: Will the schools continue to have the benefit of being involved in the network? Yes, until the funding ends in August.</p> <p>Gov: Is more funding likely to be forthcoming? This is unlikely, but professional development work among headteachers would continue among schools on the academisation journey. There will not be finance and HR support until conversion. Timing is in the hands of St Benet's. The Federation will respond as quickly as it can and in the best interests of its schools.</p> <p>There has been a significant drop in the level of finance and admin service received from County. The governance team has been reduced.</p> <p>Gov: What do St Benet's intend to do around its core team as more schools join? How will they increase capacity? This is why the timing of conversions is being considered carefully.</p> <p>Gov: What about the land at Catfield that was given to County by the church? This will be considered in the later stages of the process. Details may cause delays, and there are covenants around the field, but St Benet's will not be unused to this situation.</p>
13. Policy Approval	None for this meeting.
14. Future dates of school events	<p>All dates are available on the website.</p> <p>World Book Day will be celebrated at all three settings during the week beginning 1st March. Federation day will take place at Catfield on 21st March.</p>

	<p>Gov: What is the theme of the Federation Day? Easter.</p> <p>Gov: Will the Federation celebrate World Poetry Day? There are no plans to do so. Mother's Day worship will take place at all three schools, and Easter worship will be at the church. Governors are welcome and encouraged to attend all events.</p>
15. AOB	Governors unanimously agreed to NB and Abbie Blake being made signatories for the Hickling school fund. It currently has no signatories who are still employed by the Federation, and NB is keen to close all school funds. The money will go through the main budget.
16. Date and Time of Next Meeting	Thursday 30 th March 2023, 16:30 at Hickling. JU submitted apologies for the next meeting.
17. Summary Statement	There are many good developments happening in school and the vibe is positive.
18. Closing Moment with Prayer	The meeting ended with a moment of quiet reflection.

With no further business the meeting finished at 17:49

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

Date:

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