



Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

Minutes of a Meeting of the
Governing Board of Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools
10th December 2020 – Zoom Remote Meeting 4.30pm

Governing Board	Initials	Role	Present / Apologies / Absent
Mia Baker	MB	Co-opted Governor	Present
Natalie Butcher	NB	Headteacher/Governor	Present
Angie Johnson	AJ	Foundation Governor	Absent
Louise Lawson	LL	Co-opted 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
Rosie Brookes	RB	Co-opted Governor	Present
Emma Barker	EB	Co-opted Governor	Present
Also Present			
John Ward	JW	Educator Solutions Clerking Service	Present

1. Welcome & opening prayer	SW welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. She gave a special welcome to Rosie and Emma to their first full board meeting. She opened the meeting with a short time of reflection and prayer. She said that the meeting needed to reflect on the season of the year and the fantastic work going on in the school at this very difficult time during the pandemic.
2. Apologies & absence	None for this meeting
3. Welcome to new Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Terms of reference 2020 II. NGA Code of Conduct III. Keeping Children Safe in School 1/9/2020 IV. Register of Interests Rosie and Emma confirmed their agreement that they had read the above documents and they agreed with them. They had both completed the forms and these were now on Governor Hub. NB was asked to check that the single central register in school is updated. Action NB
4. Declaration of Interests from other governors	SW – Husband is an MSA at Sutton NB – Husband is a property developer LL – owner of the Treasure Box
5. Term of office due to expire 16th March 2021	LA Governor – Shelia Watts SW her term of office of office comes to an end on 16th March 2021. She told the meeting that she was happy to continue in the role. The meeting had no objection to her continued role as governor. The clerk was asked to set the process of re-election in motion with Governor services. Action J Ward LL informed the meeting that she was resigning her position as a governor. She had enjoyed her time on the board and had learnt a lot. She said she struggles with the strategic side of the work, she is more a hands on person. During Covid she has had to restructure her business and it still needs more time to develop it further. She thanked everyone for their support and said what a dedicated and committed team they were. SW said it was sad to see her go but she understood the circumstances. LL asked if she could still do some voluntary work in the schools once the situation gets back to some normality. NB said it would be great to have her support.
6. Minutes of Previous FGB Meeting	The minutes of the meeting held on 23 rd September 2020 were unanimously approved. SW agreed to sign a copy online on the hub.

<p>7. Matters Arising/review action plan</p>	<p>See updated action Log.</p> <p>JU said that she had looked at all the Pupil Premium documents on line and had a good understanding of the situation and the school is doing a good job. SW asked if she had seen the governor toolbox book. She said yes she had got one at her induction training. It was agreed that copies of the book be handed to the new governors by MB and LL. JU said that she had looked at the website and the only question she had was about swimming.</p> <p>NB said this was not possible this year but plans are in place to swim next summer term if the situation allows it. The youngest children will swim to try and ensure they reach the required standard by the time they get to year 6. JU said that the monitoring she has done so far had shown very positive outcomes.</p> <p>SW said that the bitesize training that had been completed had gone well and suggested that the board continue in this way next term. JS asked whether there could be training on finances. SW said that she had not seen any recently but she would look into it for the next session. Action SW</p>
<p>8. Committee Updates</p>	<p>a. Achievement and Standards – 23rd November 2020 All the documents were in the meeting folder on governor hub for this meeting. SW invited question from the board but none were raised</p> <p>b. Resources and Premises – 23rd November 2020 All the documents were in the meeting folder on governor hub for this meeting. SW invited question from the board but none were raised.</p> <p>Approval of the Budget Revision. SW said this needed to be discussed tonight as it had not been done in committee. The revision had been placed on the hub for governors to read prior to the meeting. She invited questions on the document.</p> <p>MB asked about the drop in SEND funding in the coming years, was it related to cohorts or government policy. NB said it was a combination of losing children through year 6 and those with an EHCP. Referrals are currently going through but you cannot build these in to the budget until the funding is secured. The figures will go up and down over time.</p> <p>SW said that the budget is strong at the moment but we have to be mindful of pupil numbers. NB said the figures show a dip at Sutton in September but the final date for confirmed numbers is early next year. She said she hopes that it's just a dip year.</p> <p>LR asked about the line E27 Brought in Professional services. This drops dramatically in year 2 and 3. NB explained that the budget line had been loaded to cover the significant work the school was doing with curriculum development but this could not be sustained going forward. She also said that some sports premium grant money had been placed in this line by error which had now been corrected. This was done in the original budget.</p> <p>MB asked why there was no allocation for agency support staff. NB said that supply staff were rarely used in school as cover was provided by HLTA's.</p> <p>SW asked if there any further questions, if not did the board could approve the autumn term budget revision. The revision was approved by the board and SW agreed to inform the budget officer. Action SW</p>
<p>9. Governing Board</p>	<p>a. Roles and responsibilities SW said that there were now areas that a governor needed to be allocated to. She said she would put together a list and circulate to governors so that they could indicate to her their preferences.</p> <p>Areas to be covered include, a training governor, data governor, Health and Safety governor and a Headteacher performance governor.</p> <p>SW said that she would like the board to have somebody in a stakeholder management role to promote the governors and have greater links with the parents through newsletters and the website. The person could showcase the work of the governors in newsletters and identify who they are by using the pen portraits that had been done for the website.</p> <p>SW asked the two new governors to think about which committee they would like to go on and let her know.</p> <p>LR said that a new RHSEs governor was required. SW said that JU had expressed an interest in covering this role.</p>
<p>10. Headteacher Update</p>	<p>NB said that she had posted her report on the hub for governors to read prior to the meeting and she was very happy to take questions. LR said that she had already answered her question about Sutton numbers. MB said that green class was only 13 in reception but that built up as the class moved through the school.</p> <p>MP asked about the uptake of free school meals as the numbers looked low.</p>

	<p>NB said that the numbers were low, having dropped from last year, but the real issue is the quality of the meals. Currently they cannot have hot meals delivered. Nourse are providing packed meals and many families opt to pack up themselves. There is a need to revisit the provision of meals when things settle down.</p> <p>MP asked about the funding that goes with free school meals.</p> <p>NB confirmed that the funding is linked to an annual census, but the school does encourage all the children eligible to have their meal on census day to ensure the school gets the best outcome. NB informed the meeting that since writing the report there have been two significant issues that she has had to deal with. The first was a safeguarding matter that resulted in a strap meeting and had a massive impact. Teachers and the TA are fine and the school will retain confidentiality. Second issue was a positive test for Covid last week. There was a significant impact on staffing but the children were fine. The timetable was changed and NB based herself at Sutton. She said that the situation was managed well, reality hit and we did get it right.</p> <p>SW asked whether there was anything to learn from the experience.</p> <p>NB said it was reality as opposed to paperwork. She said that when it happens it's important to make people aware of what could have been avoided. She said she instantly made the decision and knew what to do. The school was closed for the day with the support of the LA to ensure the safety of staff and pupils.</p> <p>SW asked if there was any reaction from the parents. NB said that the parents were happy with the openness and honesty from the school which had helped their understanding of the situation. NB informed the governors of breaking news from the DfE on closing schools a day early due to the track and trace system to avoid staff having to be available right up to Christmas. She is waiting till she gets a response from the LA either later tonight or tomorrow before making a decision. SW said the critical thing is the wellbeing of all the school community. The decision is with the Headteacher and the governors will await the outcome.</p>
<p>11. Website Monitoring</p>	<p>MP said that he had looked at the website and considers that with a few small adjustments it is compliant with the current requirements. He had reported this to the last committee meeting. NB said that the DfE had sent out more information and that she had sent him a link.</p> <p>MP said that he had looked at this and with a few updates we would be compliant. He said that he could not see the Covid catch-up provision statement. NB said that this was on the site under each school as it had to be reported separately. One other thing was the financial benchmarking information. SW said that this is a document that has a "best try" at making a comparison between schools of a similar size and structure. She said that there has to be a health warning with it as it is not always a good comparison <u>because we are so small</u>. The document is discussed by the R and P committee when it is published once a year. NB agreed to check if it was on the web. Action NB</p> <p>MP said that he had looked at the class blogs and these were a little out of date. He said that as long as parents were getting the key information regarding the current situation that is fine.</p> <p>MB said that the schools were using Tapestry a lot and the parents can interact with this and see what their children are doing and their individual work, it's a very good online journal. NB said that we need to revisit the purpose of the blog whether it's to inform our parents or act as an advert on the web.</p> <p>SW informed the meeting that as part of themed audits and rag ratings we need to ensure our website is compliant. MP confirmed that the website is compliant with the DfE and LA requirements. Policies and documents are being kept up to date <u>on a rota and considered</u> at every meeting. MP had The governors have audited based on the themed audit requirements and can confirmed that the school website is compliant with all items identified. (Hope this is right?)</p>
<p>12. Policies</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Behaviour, approved by the board II. Flexi-schooling SW asked whether we have any children on flexi schooling. NB said that there had been enquires, pre lockdown, but nobody had formally asked for the option for their children. The policy was approved III. Collective worship. Policy approved IV. Online Safety NB informed the governors that a new curriculum lead had been appointed and that she would carry out a review later in the year. This policy was approved V. Pay. NB said that there had been minimal changes to the previous version issued by the LA. The policy was approved. <p>NB said that she had been looking at the timetable for the review of policies and she would be making some changes to allow some of the policies fall in the correct time of year when the school will be considering that aspect of the work. She will present another batch at the next FGB meeting.</p>

<p>13. Future school dates</p>	<p>SW showed the meeting a letter she had received through her door from Sutton school informing residents that the children will be singing in the village on the 14th December complete with all the relevant Covid rules.</p> <p>NB said that they were trying hard to keep Christmas as normal as possible. Nativities will take place but not live streamed due to safeguarding. They will be recorded and available later.</p> <p>JS said there will be a Christingle tomorrow and that in Key Stage 2 the children have had a different activity every day in December.</p> <p>NB thanked the staff for all their efforts to keep the spirit going.</p>
<p>14. AOB notified to the chair in Advance</p>	<p>MP asked if an email could go to all the staff from the governors thanking them for all they had done to get the school through the current Covid crisis. SW said she would do one at the close of the meeting and send it to NB to forward. Action SW</p> <p>SW thanked the clerk for standing in this term. She was not aware if their clerk was returning after Christmas. The clerk said that he could continue till Easter if required.</p>
<p>15. Date and Time of Next Meeting</p>	<p>Tuesday 9th February 2021 at 4.30pm</p>
<p>9. b Proposal re Hickling Pre School</p>	<p>This item had moved from earlier in the meeting so that some members of the governors could leave the meeting. Julie Wones joined the meeting at this point.</p> <p>NB informed that meeting that the proposal had been placed on governor hub for governors to consider prior to the meeting. The matter had arisen again when the pre-school manager left and she had been given time to reflect on a way forward to re-structure the school at Hickling. The proposal outlines the positives and negatives for different scenarios.</p> <p>SW was interested in how JW felt about the changes being proposed. She asked whether it will make a real difference in school and be better for the children.</p> <p>JW explained that the current structure was very hard for the 4 year olds being in a mixed key stage class with the 7 year olds. It was very hard for the teacher to deliver the early year's curriculum alongside the key stage one at the same time. It would have a big impact on staff wellbeing and the benefits to the children would be massive. The reception and younger children would have total teacher time working on the early year's curriculum. An example she gave was in phonics where some of the younger children could engage in the phonics programme earlier with the reception children, something not possible in the current structure. JU said that the pre-school link at Catfield is brilliant. The link with the reception class is brilliant, there are no negatives about it and the benefits are amazing a really good option.</p> <p>JW said that the proposal would mean Hickling would be the same as Catfield with the children being all together in the one building. Currently the pre-school at Hickling seems a bit tagged on and can get forgotten, the proposal would address this issue.</p> <p>MB said that it would certainly help with curriculum planning and staff support of each other. JW currently having to run a three year cycle when others are doing a two year cycle. It would do a great deal for staff wellbeing.</p> <p>NB said it would benefit the whole of Hickling School and things would be more positive.</p> <p>SW asked about and whether NB about the impact on the 2 year olds and whether she saw any negatives.</p> <p>JW responded by saying that this had been discussed with the staff. Fifty percent of the children do not move into the main school at Hickling but transfer to other settings. Hickling is the only provision in the area for two year olds. If parents want their children to attend Hickling School they will wait until they are 3. If they are just using the provision for two year olds it <u>is difficult for that to be not</u> financially viable for the year <u>due to staff ratios</u>. We want to get things right for the village and the children.</p> <p>NB said there would be no impact on the current year 2's as they will turn 3 when the changes take place if agreed.</p> <p>SW asked how NB would communicate the changes to the parents.</p> <p>NB said that there would be an initial letter that she had drafted to inform parents about the proposed changes. This would be followed by a zoom meeting so parents could share their views. JU said the meeting was a very good idea as the parents needed a forum to voice their concerns and share opinion.</p> <p>JW left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>MP said the proposal enabled joined up working across the Federation and seemed a better way of working and would benefit the children and the school, a real plus.</p> <p>MB said the benefits would be huge for the curriculum across the schools.</p> <p>JS said that parallel classes would relieve workload for the staff.</p> <p>MB asked whether fifty percent of two year olds stay at Hickling. NB responded by saying this had</p>

	<p>been raised at Catfield when it changed but there had been no real impact. SW asked the governors if they were ready to move to a vote and all agreed. The vote was 7 in favour with none against and no abstentions. NB thanked the governors for their support and said that a communication would go out before Christmas to inform the parents of the interim arrangements.</p>
16. Summary Statement	<p>SW said that the school had survived a very tough week. Not just survived but at the same time thinking about the future and planning to ensure things are improving all the time going forward.</p>
17. Closing moment with prayer/ reflection	<p>SW asked governors to spend a moment of quiet reflecting on the meeting and the work that the school has been doing.</p>

With no further business the meeting finished at 18.20

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

Date:

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