



Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

Minutes of a Meeting of the Governing Board of Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools 16th July 2020 – Remote Meeting

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	Present
Louise Lawson	LL	Co-opted Governor	Apologies
David Lloyd	DL	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
Also Present			
Justine Petersen	JP	Educator Solutions Clerking Service	Present

1. Welcome & opening prayer	SW welcomed all present and thanked them for attending. She opened the meeting with a moment of quiet reflection on how the school environments have been made welcoming and nurturing in such difficult circumstances, and on the hard work and effort made by school staff and the need to constantly adapt and change.
2. Apologies & absence	Received and accepted from Louise Lawson.
3. Declarations of Interest	Governors were given the opportunity to declare any new business interests or potential conflict of interests arising from the items on the agenda. LL is the owner of Treasure Box. AJ is a parish councillor at Catfield and a governor of Blue Sky Federation. DL is the governor of an independent school. MP is married to the Clerk. SW's husband is an MSA at Sutton. NB's husband runs a local painting and decorating business.
4. Minutes of Previous FGB Meeting	The minutes of the meeting held on 29 th June 2020 were unanimously approved subject to 2 amendments: SW's business interest had been declared but not noted – her husband is an MSA at Sutton. Under item 12 NB was thanked for the way in which she had handled the online meeting for new parents. Natalie Fiske was also thanked but this was omitted from the minutes.
5. Matters Arising	NB provided details of the headteacher peer group that will meet half termly. Windmill Primary Federation, All Saints Federation and Flourish Federation will also take part. AJ has not uploaded the Hickling monitoring report. Action – AJ to upload Hickling maths café monitoring report. AJ will contact Paul Dunning in the autumn. The Annual Schedule of Business and SIDP will be reviewed in September. AJ completed 3 Bitesize training sessions. Governor induction was particularly useful. Governors will schedule bitesize training sessions for September. Action – Governors to complete bitesize training sessions in September. Governors will be invited to attend the staff safeguarding training session to be held in September via Zoom. The Business Manager has responsibility for GDPR. She has started to work through the annual checklist. There are no concerns. A request has been received that falls under the right to be forgotten legislation. This is being dealt with appropriately. AJ has investigated whether this was the result of any safeguarding

	<p>issue or concern, and she is satisfied that it is not.</p> <p>DL spoke with County HR regarding headteacher performance management. The advice was to continue as normal as far as possible, but there was a number of impediments to this. DL has discussed the position with NB, LR and AJ. The last 12 months will be reviewed in September and a plan for the next 12 months will be devised. All successes would be tied in. This is in line with practice in other federations.</p> <p>The breakdown of pre-school finances and updated capital spend summary will be carried forward.</p> <p>Action – JW to upload breakdown of Hickling pre-school finances to Governorhub.</p> <p>Action - JW to provide updated summary of capital spend position.</p>
<p>6. Committee Updates</p>	<p>Achievement & Standards – No meeting this half term.</p> <p>Resources & Premises – No meeting this half term.</p> <p>Cluster – No update.</p>
<p>7. Budget & Finance</p>	<p>Budget Revision 1</p> <p>SW reminded governors that there were various questions at the last meeting and governors had not felt the budget to be as complete as it should have been. The budget was revised at submitted to the R&P Committee, and approved subject to certain caveats and subjectivities. These will be forwarded to County finance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More work will be done on staffing. There is no longer a large budget surplus. Budget year 3 shows the Federation spending £53k more than income. Year 2 roughly breaks even. This needs attention in revision 2. 2. More details are given regarding line E27. There is a £34k change in year 1 compared to what was presented at the last FGB meeting. 3. A full update is needed in order for governors to fully understand the capital position. 4. Each of the 3 points above should be addressed in time to feed into revision 2. SW will attend the revision 2 meeting. The work must be completed to governors satisfaction in advance. <p>SW will highlight the differences when the budget is submitted to the County Finance Officer.</p> <p><u>Governors unanimously approved revision 1 without amendment.</u></p> <p>Action – NB to ascertain who revision 1 needs to be sent to.</p> <p>Catfield:</p> <p>Covid-19 has highlighted just how small the 4th classroom at Catfield actually is. It was built to accommodate 10 YrR children but it will have 26 in September. There is the option to use the hall as a classroom, but NB is keen to explore the use of the mobile and how this could be made fit for purpose as a classroom for older children.</p> <p>NPS have visited and an email listing the suggested works has been circulated to governors. There will be pressure for September in terms of welfare, but the work needs to be done. JW has requested 3 quotations.</p> <p>The aim is for the work to be completed by September but if this proves too stressful the work will be postponed and the hall will be used as a classroom. It may be difficult to find a contractor who can complete the work over the summer break.</p> <p>Gov: Could NPS complete the work?</p> <p>No, they have a backlog of about 1 year.</p> <p>Gov: When we have discussed and considered building work in the past, we have always been more comfortable with NPS.</p> <p>NB advised that NPS suggested the Federation find another contractor because they could not complete the work in anything like the required timeframe.</p> <p>Gov: Did NPS provide a quotation?</p> <p>They have given an estimate of what they believe the work will cost (c. £4k).</p> <p>SW advised that this is outside of NB’s delegated spending limit but £10k has already been allocated in the budget.</p> <p>There will be additional costs that have not been included in the quotation, such as moving a whiteboard.</p> <p>Gov: Is the flooring adequate?</p> <p>NPS raised no concerns regarding the flooring but it could be replaced anyway.</p> <p>Gov: Could the whiteboard come under a separate spending allocation?</p> <p>It could possibly come under capital, but governors do not yet have a clear picture of the capital position.</p> <p>It was agreed that the quotations would be shared with the R&P Committee by email once received.</p> <p>Action – JW/NB to forward quotations for work on Catfield mobile to governors for approval by email.</p>

	<p>The £10k allocated in the budget could be used for this. NB reminded governors that should capital be used there would be an additional £10k in the budget that would remain unspent, and there are already concerns about the surplus this year.</p> <p>Governors requested an urgent update on capital in order to determine whether this should be made into a capital project.</p> <p>Governors approved in principle for a sum of up to £10k to be used for the mobile project at Catfield subject to the R&P Committee having sight of all 3 quotations.</p> <p>Decorating:</p> <p>SW informed governors that the Business Manager had asked NB's husband to quote for some decorating work. This is because he is available and has a strong reputation. NB has raised the matter as a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Gov: How much money is involved and what does the quotation cover?</p> <p>NB advised that it is for various projects across the Federation – mainly for painting interior walls that have not been decorated for some time.</p> <p>Governors were mindful of the need to go through the correct process. The cost of the work is not yet known but further information and other quotations will be sent to the R&P Committee.</p> <p>Gov: Could the Caretaker do any work on this over the summer?</p> <p>No, his time is already committed.</p> <p>AJ may have a contact who would provide another quotation.</p> <p>NB has deliberately not become involved. It has been left to JW and to the Heads of School.</p> <p>Gov: We should seek reliable references for each quotation along with the size of the job involved and whether it would be paid by the job or hourly.</p> <p>Governors suggested a retainer period (for example 3 years) during which the contractor would be available without the need for another full process.</p> <p>Availability is key.</p> <p>Action – Additional information on the decorating works to be shared with the R&P Committee when available.</p>
<p>8. Risk Assessment</p>	<p>Approval of Updated Risk Assessment</p> <p>Sutton had a health and safety inspection this week. The process was very comprehensive, including a site visit and consideration of the current risk assessment. Practice was said to be outstanding. There is only one action point, and this is virtually unheard of. SW will receive the full report in due course.</p> <p>NB has had to re-write the risk assessment. There is still a balance between social distancing and having the children back in school.</p> <p>The inspector raised no concerns around the risk assessment. The children are not seated facing each other but they cannot be seated 2 metres apart.</p> <p>Gov: How will you achieve that?</p> <p>By staggering. JS showed governors photographs of how her classroom had been set up. Younger children will not be sitting around a table as usual. There will be designated carpet spaces. Hygiene will be key and hand sanitiser will be available at all times.</p> <p>JS advised that the Federation has been ultra-cautious in interpreting Government guidance and the County interpretation.</p> <p>Gov: Will this mean you will need to rethink how you organise the school day again?</p> <p>What is taught will be the norm.</p> <p>Gov: What will be the toll on staff?</p> <p>Staff will have to consider the practical side, such as teachers having minimal contact with the children and keeping their distance. The schools will have Step Up September. The gaps in learning will be very varied and for some they will be considerable. Staff will need to look at what the children have missed from this year and this information will be passed to the new teacher. The first month back will be about intensive teaching to fill any gaps, but the Government has made it clear that the curriculum must be broad imbalanced.</p> <p>Gov: Will there be group sessions?</p> <p>The September inset has been planned. NB was able to find some recorded training around making assessments to determine the gaps. Staff can choose when to complete this training, but it will count as an inset later in the year.</p> <p>The 'bubbles' will meet to discuss how this can be made to work. Staff are too exhausted to consider it at the moment so they will take a break first. The children will need to learn what it is like to be in a COVID-19 school.</p> <p>Governors thanked and commended NB. It is clear just how much work has gone into the risk assessment.</p>

	<p>Governors unanimously agreed to approve the risk assessment as the modus operandi from September onwards.</p> <p>NB advised that the LA changes its guidance regularly and does not send out an alert. There may be occasions when she has to inform governors of change, but this is outside of her control. More guidance from the DfE will be published on 17th August, so staff will take their break at this end of the Holidays. Senior leaders are trying to manage staff wellbeing as best they can. Gov: So this will give staff a break of three clear weeks? Yes. DL offered his support at anytime as governor link for health and safety. Gov: Will all staff be able to stop working next week? Yes although all will be in school on Wednesday to tidy. JS advised that staff have been able to do the jobs they would usually do over the summer holidays this week. This has given them a step forward and has been positive from a wellbeing perspective.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a. Monitoring</p> <p>DL will be in school next week to meet with the caretaker. He will also receive the report from the Sutton health and safety inspection as he is unable to visit for monitoring purposes at this time. Hickling and Catfield will be inspected in the autumn. DL is happy to be involved if required.</p>
9. Headteacher Update	<p>More children will be in school before the summer. All 'rising 5s' will be at Hickling for 2 days next week, and all other children who want to be in school. A 4th bubble is open at Catfield. All children in Yrs 1 and 2 will be able to come in at Sutton. Yrs 2 and 6 will still have a leavers celebration. Staff are trying to make it as special as possible given the current limitations. The awards ceremonies will be filmed so parents can see their children receive certificates and Bibles. Gov: Could the parents be invited via Zoom? The network is unlikely to be able to cope with this. Staff are mindful that some of the usual leavers events that would usually happen for Yr6 cannot take place. Yr6 have done very well and the children have formed a strong bond that they will take to high school.</p>
10. Communication to Parents & Other Stakeholders	<p>NB is formulating a letter that will be sent to parents before the end of term. Children will be able to wear trainers to school next term to avoid any unnecessary changing of shoes. It is important that this information is received early. Communication systems are robust. Some parents and children will be anxious. Those who are particularly anxious will be invited to drop into the school, see the setting and talk to a member of staff. Photographs of classroom settings will be sent to all families. All children must be back in school at the start of the autumn term.</p>
11. Health & Safety Checks	<p>Covered above.</p>
12. SIDP & Monitoring of Curriculum from September Onwards	<p>The SIDP will be reconsidered in September taking account of national and local guidance. NB will write a brief plan for 'Step Up September', covering how the children will be measured and baselines for the first few weeks back. The focus for the first few weeks will be settling them back into school.</p>
13. Policy Approval	<p>None.</p>
14. AOB	<p>None.</p>
15. Date and Time of Next Meeting	<p>Wednesday 23rd September 2020, 16.30. The meeting will consider the committee structure and policies, including safeguarding.</p> <p>It was agreed that the usual committee structure and meeting calendar would be adopted again in September. Children will be back in school and there will be the same curriculum responsibilities. It was agreed that Governing Board meetings would continue to be held remotely during the autumn term. The advantages outweigh the disadvantages, particularly in the short term. Governors could safely view the schools in September. Monitoring visits could take place onsite while continuing with virtual meetings.</p>

16. Summary Statement	Governors have reinforced throughout the meeting the extent of the time and effort put in by everyone in the school community to deliver what they have for the children. This is above and beyond what has been offered in many other schools. Governors remain cohesive and have continued to work as a team throughout.
17. Closing Moment with Prayer	The meeting was closed with a moment of quiet reflection.

With no further business the meeting finished at 18.02

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

Date:

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