



## Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

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

Governing Board	Initials	Role	Present / Apologies / Absent
Mia Baker	MB	Co-opted Governor	Absent – maternity leave
Natalie Butcher	NB	Headteacher/Governor	Present
Angie Johnson	AJ	Foundation Governor	Apologies
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	Apologies
Emma Barker	EB	Co-opted Governor	Present
<b>Also Present</b>			
Justine Petersen	JP	Educator Solutions Clerking Service	Present

<b>1. Welcome &amp; opening prayer</b>	SW welcomed all present to the meeting and thanked them for attending.
<b>2. Apologies &amp; absence</b>	Received from Angie Johnson and Rose Brookes.
<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 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 were unanimously approved without amendment. SW will sign a copy on Governorhub.
<b>5. Matters Arising</b>	<p>Governors reviewed the Action Log.</p> <p>NB had asked the Business Manager to make contact with AJ regarding a convenient time to monitor the Single Central Record and complete the GDPR checklist. AJ was not present to report back. Action to remain open.</p> <p>Governors were unsure whether AJ had discussed SEN monitoring with the SENCo. Action to remain open.</p> <p>The question of whether benchmarking data was just for Catfield or for the Federation combined would be moved to the R&amp;P Committee.</p> <p><b>Action – Clerk to move action regarding benchmarking data to the R&amp;P Committee.</b></p> <p>All other actions were marked as complete.</p>
<b>6. Committee Updates</b>	<p><b>a. Achievement &amp; Standards – No meeting this half term.</b></p> <p><b>b. Resources &amp; Premises – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021</b> The minutes were circulated and there were no comments or concerns.</p> <p><b>c. Networking with Other Schools</b> The Federation is part of the Norfolk Partnership Project to develop middle leaders. There is also a project across small schools in Norfolk to celebrate the arts, and NB is hopeful there will be a large celebration in the Cathedral. NB is networking more widely as part of her NPQH. The cluster continues to communicate informally when needed, but there are no official meetings. NB has spoken with the Headteacher of Stalham Academy regarding transition to high school. The cluster will take a view on this, because the arrangements are not quite right.</p>
<b>7. Governing</b>	<b>Governor Monitoring:</b>

<p><b>Board</b></p>	<p><b>Feedback from Pupil Stakeholder Meeting</b>  EB provided feedback. She had circulated a note in advance of the meeting.  <b>Gov: What are the main things to take away from this?</b>  The session was very positive. The Federation has three separate schools on three separate sites and in three different villages, but feedback was positive from all children and there is a sense of cohesion. They have so much respect for each other.  It was a practical way for governors to engage during a time when they are unable to come into school. Governors were able to speak to children from all three schools in a very safe way.</p> <p><b>Governor Monitoring Going Forwards</b>  Governors are still unable to come into school. Some are planning to attend outdoor events, such as sports days and the picnic.  NB stressed that it is time to consider monitoring in light of Ofsted. There will be professional challenge around how the Federation is managing the gaps since the children returned to school. It would be useful if governors were able to monitor this and to speak to staff.  <b>Gov: Does this fall more within the remit of the A&amp;S Committee?</b>  Yes. Governors agreed that online sessions would seem sensible, but they were keen not to put another burden on staff. It will be planned carefully to ensure there is no detrimental effect on wellbeing.  NB suggested wellbeing be tackled first. Governors would be able to check in with staff, and staff would see this as a positive thing. Governors can also chat informally with staff at school events. This would just be an informal check in asking how the staff are and whether there is anything governors can do to support them. This would be done over a period of weeks, and some would not be until next year.</p> <p>NB suggested useful areas to cover initially would be the following:  EYFS - RB would contact Natalie Fiske as EYFS Lead. A new EYFS framework will be in place in September.  Phonics and early reading - RB would contact the English lead.  RSHE – JU would arrange with NB.  Behaviour, mental health and the response to the pandemic. JU could do this next year or chat informally with SLT in order to get an overview. NB will consider whether it should be done before or after the summer break, and she will inform JU.  <b>Action – RB and JU to contact staff link regarding virtual monitoring meetings.</b></p> <p><b>Gov: Are all staff back in school?</b>  Yes.  <b>Gov: Is the Maths Lead still on maternity leave?</b>  Yes, JS is leading maths in the interim.</p> <p><b>Training Log</b>  MP has completed safeguarding training and training on monitoring in church schools/academies. LR completed Ofsted training, and she recommended this to other governors. She will forward the delegate pack to the Clerk for uploading on Governorhub. This includes an excellent questionnaire for governors to use with staff, and LR felt it would be useful to put these subject areas on agendas periodically.  <b>Action – LR to forward Ofsted training delegate pack to the Clerk.</b></p> <p><b>Return to Face-to-Face Meetings</b>  The decision was made unanimously to continue with virtual meetings at least until the end of his term. Proposed by SW and seconded by MP.  Governors agreed it seemed sensible to continue to meet virtually until the end of the year when there would be a clearer picture of what the Government would decide to do on 21st June. Governors were keen not to create any additional workload on staff around risk assessments and social distancing. Workload remains a concern, and virtual meetings are affective.</p>
<p><b>8. Headteacher Update</b></p>	<p>NB highlighted specific areas of her report that was circulated in advance of the meeting. They were initially concerns around pupil numbers at Sutton, but they are starting to increase. Stalham Academy is very oversubscribed, and some children are being allocated to Sutton. It will still be below PAN, but it is looking healthier than before. Pre-school numbers are also doing well. There is a big dip in the YrR cohort nationally, but this is not having much impact on the Federation.  <b>Gov: Is this because there were less children in the year group?</b>  Yes. Some schools are now having to do mixed age classes, but the Federation already has this.</p>

	<p>Additional children have joined Catfield. One year group is above PAN because County directed the school to take a child. The child and family are very happy to be joining.</p> <p>Hot lunches will be offered after half term. There would need to be adaptations to the site in September anyway, and the financial cost will not be high. Bubbles are more fluid at the moment, and this is easier to manage in terms of staffing and getting the children in and out of the hall.</p> <p>There has been a lot of recruitment across the Federation. NB has completed exit interviews, and all with the exception of one member of staff are moving out of education. This is a very common picture across schools at the moment. The pandemic has made a lot of people reflect on what they want to do. Governors commented that there were similar trends in other industries. Interviews took place for Sutton last week, but no appointment was made and the post will need to be re-advertised. The post is only for one term. Governors congratulated NB on being strong enough not to appoint. NB has reached out to the cluster to ask if they know of a potential candidate.</p> <p><b>Gov: How is staff wellbeing?</b> It is extremely difficult at the moment. Staff are incredibly resilient, but this is the hardest it's been so far in the last 18 months. All staff have reached out when they have needed to. NB provided an anonymized example of when a member of staff reached out pre-emptively. The Federation has the ethos that 'it is okay not to be okay'. Staff are being flexible and they are looking after each other. There is real strength of character among the staff team. There is a group of very high needs children at Catfield. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic.</p> <p><b>Gov: Did this impact on the exclusion?</b> Yes, the Inclusion Team has been very supportive but there is no quick fix. NB stressed that JS has done a wonderful job of keeping her team going. JU commented that her children are at Catfield, and their enjoyment of school and their education have not been negatively impacted. This is testament to how well the staff are doing. The team is passionate, and they all want to do their best. They are having to fix so many things before they can move forward.</p> <p><b>Gov: Are we continuing with remote learning?</b> Yes, but this has not had to be put in place apart from for some isolating children at Catfield. The systems are all in place and the children were able to access work immediately.</p> <p><b>Gov: How is attendance? What are the main trends? It seems low at Hickling and Catfield, and high at Sutton?</b> Reintegration plans for some children have had an impact at Catfield. There has also been one fixed term exclusion. Some families at Hickling have taken holidays. NB has received requests, but she cannot authorise them.</p> <p><b>Gov: Attendance is not impacting one group more than another?</b> No. There has been less transmission of other illnesses over the last year because of the precautions put in place. There is some unauthorised and persistent lateness, and over the last three weeks children have started catching colds. There is a lot to learn from the pandemic about how attendance is managed in terms of high-quality hygiene with the children.</p> <p><b>Gov: Are pupil progress meetings held virtually?</b> No, they are socially distanced face to face meetings. NB stressed that the deprivation gap is widening. The remote learning offer was completely fair but the gap in progress has widened. NB has discussed this with Karen Hutchison, and she reported that it is happening everywhere. Those children were not getting the life experiences during remote learning. A group of children at Catfield has missed out on social and emotional skills, and staff are working hard to bridge those gaps.</p>
<p><b>9. School Development Plan</b></p>	<p>The updated plan has been uploaded to Governorhub. <b>Action – All governors to be familiar with the updated SDP before the next meeting.</b></p>
<p><b>10. Future of the Federation Moving Forward</b></p>	<p>No update.</p>

<b>11. Budget/Finance</b>	<b>SFVS</b> SW has updated the SFVS based on governor comments. There were no real changes to the document from the points made by AJ, so SW did not feel it needed to come back to governors again. Governors unanimously approved the SFVS. SW will forward it to the Business Manager and ask her to send off by the end of the week. <b>Action – SW to forward SFVS to Business Manager and ask her to send it by the end of this week.</b>
<b>12. Policies</b>	<b>EYFS Policy</b> Unanimously approved without amendment.  <b>PE Policy</b> Unanimously approved without amendment.
<b>13. Future School Dates</b>	The Federation has decided to hold a staycation for KS2 children in July. These children will miss out on the residential that usually takes place at this time of year. Parents will be informed this week. Yrs 5-6 will be camping, and Yrs 3-4 will attend during the days only. Staff are determined to make this occasion as special as possible for the children. JS talked through the itinerary. The financial cost to parents will not be high, and it will be more inclusive of Pupil Premium children. It will also be local, and children will be able to go home if needed. Governors were invited to join in and enjoy the occasion. JS stressed that all staff across the Federation have been extremely supportive. Julie Wones and Natalie Fiske will be staying overnight.  Dates of the sports days and picnics on the Federation website. All children transitioning from Yr2 and Yr6 will receive a leavers hoodie and a Bible. Staff are keen for it to feel as normal as possible for the children.  The high school has only set one transition day during the last week of term. All schools will join this together.
<b>14. AOB notified to the chair in Advance</b>	None.
<b>15. Date and Time of Next Meeting</b>	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2021, 16.30
<b>16. Summary Statement</b>	Staff are working extremely hard to ensure everything is as normal as possible for the children and to keep everything ticking over. Feedback from children from all three sites has been extremely positive, and there is a real sense of cohesion. This can also be seen with a staycation, where staff from all three sites have come together in order to provide the best experience possible for those children. There is a real sense of togetherness.
<b>17. Closing Moment with Prayer/Reflection</b>	The meeting ended with a moment of quiet reflection.

With no further business the meeting finished at 17.32

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

Date:

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