



Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools

Minutes of a Meeting of the Governing Board of Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools 29th June 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	Present
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			
Jo Nutbeam	JN	Associate Governor	Present
Jo Wheadon	JW	Business Manager	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 what the school is achieving, and the part governors can play in the wellbeing of staff and children moving forward.
2. Apologies & absence	None.
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. JN is a former headteacher of the Federation and an Ofsted inspector.
4. Minutes of Previous FGB Meeting	The minutes of the meeting held on 28 th April 2020 were unanimously approved.
5. Matters Arising	Governors are not going into school at this time. Categories in the Online Safety Policy are not a priority. It will be marked in purple on the Action Log. JU's pupil premium training course was cancelled. She will complete when possible. LL will check the Bitesize training on Governorhub and highlight any that would be beneficial. Action – LL to check Bitesize training on Hub and highlight any that would be useful. AJ has not yet uploaded the Maths monitoring report. Action – AJ to upload Maths monitoring report. AJ has not yet arranged to meet with Paul Dunning. This will be done in September. The Annual Schedule of Business will be reviewed in September. JW advised that the cloud-based Star system is not being rolled out to LA schools at this time. Action closed. The quotations for grass-cutting were on hold as visitors were being discouraged from coming onto site. Gov: Are we in a position to move forward now? NB felt there is now some leeway if it can be done safely. A temporary arrangement is in place but the contract needs to be firmed-up long term. The Clerk has a copy of the GDPR Annual Checklist. She will forward this to AJ. AJ and NB to action.

	<p>Action – Clerk to forward GDPR Annual Checklist to AJ. AJ and NB to action. DL took advice from Educator Solutions regarding headteacher performance management. The advice was to continue as usual but to adapt targets as governors see fit. The situation was complicated by NB’s phased return. DL, AJ, LR and NB will meet to discuss how to proceed.</p> <p>Action – DL to arrange next steps in Headteacher’s performance management. All other actions were marked as complete.</p>
<p>6. Committee Updates</p>	<p>Achievement & Standards – No meeting this half term. Resources & Premises – No meeting this half term. Cluster – No update.</p>
<p>7. Headteacher Update</p>	<p>The schools opened to all suggested year groups on 1st June. Key worker children, vulnerable children and those with EHCPs continued to attend. ‘Nursery’ was defined as the ‘Rising 5’ pre-school.</p> <p>Uptake is increasing – 45 are eligible at Catfield and 34 are attending. 24 are eligible and Hickling and 13 are attending. 46 are eligible at Sutton and 22 are attending.</p> <p>3 members of staff are shielding. 2 are also working from home for non-Covid reasons. Wellbeing is good. NB and the Heads of School check in regularly with staff.</p> <p>Catfield will open a 4th bubble from next week to support transition. Vulnerable children who have been out of school for a long time may struggle. Sutton completed a survey. Over 90% of Yr2 want to return to school. They will be in during the last 2 days of term. Governors congratulated the school on this initiative. It is unfortunate that the DfE did not consider infant schools. The response was also positive at Hickling. Hickling will offer the last 2 days and possibly one day per week for the remainder of the term. Engagement with home learning is good. Children receive direct feedback. NB is responsible for overseeing the welfare of vulnerable children. Contact is at least fortnightly. NB does a weekly video message to all children.</p> <p>Welfare calls have been made to all families with additional calls to vulnerable families made by NB. All children with a social worker are now in school. This is above and beyond what is being done by most schools in Norfolk. NB receives regular calls from the Vulnerable Pupil Attendance Lead. 2 Child in Need meetings have taken place remotely.</p> <p>End of year reports must still be completed. Staff have submitted them to NB and they will be sent home later this week. What has been achieved by the children must be celebrated.</p> <p>NB will join a headteacher peer support network for headteachers of similar schools. They will work together on school development priorities. Gov: Who is in this group? NB will find out. There are small schools and some federations.</p> <p>Planning for September has been difficult. Staff are planning as normal and will adjust if further guidelines are published. DfE guidance is likely to be published this week. Pupil numbers look healthy for September across all settings. Gov: This is very positive and it was picked up in the budget meeting. Why have numbers increased so much? One small year groups is still moving through Catfield and Sutton, but regular cohorts are now coming through. The pre-schools have had an impact, and Hickling will have 10 in YrR in September.</p> <p>NB expressed concern that Catfield will have 90 children in such a small building from September. One classroom is very small and social distancing will be difficult. She will meet with an NPS surveyor next week to determine whether the mobile could be used for older children and, if not, what else could be done. Otherwise the plan would be to use the hall as a classroom if social distancing is still required.</p> <p>The role of the SENCo will remain across the Federation, but one HLTA at Sutton will be released to take on an assistant role. This will be part time only, and the remainder of the time will be spent working with Yr5/6 at Catfield. The member of staff has training in supporting mental health and wellbeing in young people, and this will be a good use of her skills. It will also be good for her wellbeing.</p>

	<p>A temporary TA will be in place at Sutton with the role being advertised formally in due course. Gov: Will this be permanent? The post will be permanent but there must be a recruitment process. Gov: Has it been included in the budget? Yes, with an additional member of staff from September.</p> <p>Hickling will have 10 children in YrR from September, and there will be more need for exclusive teaching in the mornings. One member of staff will have their hours adjusted slightly for one year only.</p> <p>Gov: What will this mean for staff over the summer? Are you expecting more guidelines to be released? Unions have made it clear that staff will not be working over the summer break. Guidance should be published before the end of term, but this is unpredictable. If the guidance is published very late then there may be no choice but to get together over the summer.</p> <p>Gov: What about the staff who are shielding? Will they be back in September? This is not known, and other things may need consideration, such as staff not being allowed to work in more than one school. NB is awaiting clarification. There will probably be restrictions around Federation days and sporting events. Governors stressed the fact that the financial situation is positive and the Federation can be creative if needed.</p>
<p>8. School Development Plan</p>	<p>Headteachers have submitted survey results for the support group. There is a common picture across Norfolk. The impact of the pandemic on children’s mental health and wellbeing, and on gaps in learning are the most significant.</p> <p>Many targets from this year will need to be carried over with adjustments to consider mental health and learning gaps.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role of subject leads. There is still work to be done but this had been going well before the lockdown. A term has been missed and adjustments will be needed. 2. Christian vision. This has gone well but it will need to consider mental health and wellbeing from the perspective of a church school. 3. Fluency in Maths. MB has worked hard and staff have undertaken CPD. A new Calculations Policy will be in place and Maths has progressed well this year. RSE will need to be included as this is statutory from September. There is RSE bitesize training on Governorhub. 4. Phonics and early reading. This will need to continue with the addition of a handwriting element. 5. Governance target around holding school leaders to account. This will continue as it is but with a post-Covid slant. <p>Gov: Would it be better to review the SDP as a whole in September and base it around those circumstances as they are, rather than trying to amend it now? NB agreed that she will need to assess the situation in September, but these are her current thoughts.</p> <p>Gov: Are schools likely to be provided with tests or systems with which to assess children? This is unknown.</p> <p>Gov: Should the SDP become about reviewing and assessing as the first step and then determining key learning objectives and any work needed around wellbeing? Yes, the first half term will be about unpicking. There has been no information around national testing in phonics, KS1 or KS2 next year.</p> <p>Gov: Should this be recorded as our plan for September? Yes, NB will review and assess what the learning priorities are and identify actions around health and wellbeing. Governors will identify priorities for reviews and monitoring rather than simply drop back into the usual annual cycle. Governors approved the SDP but there will be more specific discussions in the autumn.</p> <p>JS advised that Yr6 have come back into school very well. They were ready to come back and to learn. There will be gaps for the Yr5 children returning in September. She is not sure they will slot back into education as quickly as those who returned in June.</p> <p>JN commended NB for the work she has done and continues to do. The Federation is lucky to have her. <i>JN left the meeting at 17.15.</i></p>

9. Budget & Finance

Business Manager to Talk Through the Budget

JW provided an update. She reminded governors that pupil funding lags behind by one year. SEN figures will be amended to reflect recent fluctuations.

Pupil premium is unchanged.

IO6 includes the £15k Covid grant for additional costs to the school. The County Finance Officer recommended setting up a different departmental code.

Gov: Are the Covid costs in the budget?

Some costs have not been included in the budget but have been spent. The Government is not being as generous with Covid funding as it initially implied. Additional staffing hours cannot be claimed despite all LSAs working through their lunch break and claiming from the schools. Additional cleaning costs have been incurred at Catfield for the autumn and these cannot be claimed for. Cleaning costs can only be claimed in the event of a deep clean following a case in school, although the Federation did a deep clean for a suspected case.

Gov: So that £15k is inaccurate?

It is likely to be inaccurate but it will be amended on revision 2. The deadline for claiming is 21st July.

Gov: How much has been spent that is not included in the budget?

£1.5k. The maximum that can be claimed is £25k.

Gov: £13.5k that cannot be claimed is in the budget and will be removed at the next revision?

Yes, but JW does not yet know what can be claimed for.

Governors were mindful that the Federation has a rising surplus and small numbers.

IO7 includes the Hickling Tesco grant. The Sutton funds have just been received. There is £1k remaining for Catfield.

Income from Mallards this year has been removed.

Income from clubs has been reduced for the summer term.

There are no changes to catering income. This will be examined in revision 2.

The 2018 refund from the sickness insurance scheme has just been received.

Income from visits has been left the same but it will probably decrease depending on Covid guidance.

Gov: Have we got expenditure related to visits and has it stayed the same?

Yes, it has stayed the same. The Catfield trip has been paid for and income has been banked, although the trip is on hold. The coach costs should be the only difference.

Funded pre-school income has been received as normal but invoiced income stopped this term. This was already allowed for in the budget.

Governors requested information specifically on the position at Hickling. They would like it broken down.

JW will upload to Governorhub when available.

Action – JW to upload breakdown of Hickling pre-school finances to Governorhub.

The teaching staff line has gone down. A 0.2 teacher will leave at the end of August but the gap can be filled. Additional PPA hours must be allowed for, and additional HLTA hours to cover.

Gov: Why does that line dip down from years 1 and 2?

A member of staff is covering a vacancy. Her contract has been extended until the end of December, and nothing has been included for years 2 and 3. This will be done in revision 2. The member of staff will be added for future years so that the costs are included.

There are a number of welfare staff who are on temporary contracts. JW will determine whether permanent contracts are affordable.

Gov: Is this another reason why the surpluses are high?

Yes, it will be dealt with when JW is in school later this week. A trial budget will be uploaded to the Hub on the basis of temporary contracts being made permanent.

Gov: The budget is not as realistic as we would like but there is no recognition of this in the notes provided by the County Finance Officer. The difference could potentially be £20k. I am concerned that if there is a member of staff who is not currently in the system, this is not a true picture of the budget. There is no acknowledgement anywhere in the notes of the Finance Officer, but he does make reference to rising surpluses.

Gov: This is not an issue if it is rectified. Overall staffing costs are around 72%, which is very low. There could be an argument as to whether the Federation is utilising the funds provided for the benefit of the children. Without a plan for revision 2 the Federation could be vulnerable.

Gov: EO3 has a drop of £38k between the current prediction and year 2. This is a lot of

educational support staff.

Gov: Also, the hours have gone down although pupil numbers trend up overall.

JW advised that this is because of the temporary contracts. The figures will increase later this week. There are around 12 staff with a least a temporary increase in their contract. All will be put in as permanent.

JW's hours have increased for the autumn and spring term, and then reduced for the summer.

The Secretary at Catfield has an additional hour.

Gov: Is this also temporary?

It is temporary at the moment but it will be included as permanent later this week.

Gov: Admin costs are also trending downwards.

EO7 now includes breakfast and after school clubs.

MSA hours are up slightly as Norse is no longer setting up and clearing up the dining hall.

A pupil-specific MSA is no longer needed at Sutton.

Additional money has been included in E12 for any adaptations at Catfield, such as making additional classrooms. The amount included is a guess only.

An interim arrangement is in place for grass cutting, but official quotations will be needed long-term. The amount allocated has been increased to £10k to ensure Forest Schools areas are also kept tidy. This will be funded by PP.

The amount for cleaning materials has been doubled. 50% budgeted was already spent.

E19 includes additional funds for a Forest Schools wish list at Catfield and a Federation handwriting scheme.

E20 has not increased. It includes the £23k capital spend that was already agreed. JW will seek updated quotations, as those initially received have expired.

Gov: Could governors see an updated summary of the capital spend position?

Yes, JW will provide.

Action – JW to provide updated summary of capital spend position.

E22 includes money for internet phones. One contract in one school does not end until March, and JW will give notice when appropriate. £1k has been allocated for 3 phones and contracts. This has also been included for future years.

Gov: Why has E27 gone down so much?

This is the change in the brought forward balance of the PE Premium grant. Charges from Premier Sport were also removed.

The previous County Finance Officer had included a separate balance for Catfield and an amalgamated balance for all schools. The current Finance Officer has advised that these are the correct figures as should have been brought forward. It was less than had been budgeted for.

Gov: A £30k difference?

Yes, Premier Sport was removed for all 3 schools.

Gov: The Finance Officer has been through this?

Yes.

Gov: With reference to the notes for E27, I'm not sure I have reached a comfortable position for this as a change. It will be discussed outside of the meeting as a separate issue.

The Catfield loan has not yet been paid off but governors were unsure how many years are left.

Discussion and Approval by the Governing Board

Gov: As a Board we need to keep a very close eye on expenditure relating to staffing.

SW proposed that the Governing Board did not accept the revision.

Governors unanimously agreed with this proposal.

Governors were not comfortable submitting a budget that has things missing, especially when these things are not mentioned in the budget notes. The budget notes make reference to growing surpluses that are not true numbers.

Gov: When is the deadline for submission?

21st July.

SW is willing to be involved in discussions and updates, but she is confident that JW has it in hand. There were technical difficulties during the budget meeting.

	<p>JW will work on the budget with the County Finance Officer. Staffing issues will be rectified this week. An amended budget will be sent to the next meeting.</p> <p>JW left the meeting at 17.52.</p>
10. Data protection & Annual Checklist	Covered above.
11. Policy Approval	<p>Calculations Policy LR reviewed the policy and forwarded notes to MB. All suggestions have been incorporated. LR was confident that the policy is very strong, and it links well to the Federation's vision and Christian values. Governors thanked MB for her hard work. The Calculations Policy was unanimously adopted without amendment.</p>
12. AOB	AJ attended a virtual meeting for new parents. She commended NB's handling of the situation. She managed to maintain the buzz of the schools even during a remote meeting.
13. Date and Time of Next Meeting	Thursday 16 th July 2020, 16.30.
14. Summary Statement	It is important to recognise how far the Federation has come. It is above the national and local averages for attendance. Much hard work has gone into actioning recommendations and guidance. Yr6 were eager to come into school to learn. 6/7 Yr6 children are in school and the other child will be attending the leaving celebration. Staff think individually about the children and ensure all are included.
15. 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:

.....

.....