



## Tas Valley Church Schools Federation

Preston CE VC Primary and Saxlingham Nethergate CE VC Primary

### Full Governing Board Meeting

Monday 20 June 2022 at 6.30pm, via [Microsoft Teams](#)

#### Minutes

**Present:**

Diane Perry-Yates DPY (Chair of Governors)  
 Matt Walker MW (Executive Headteacher)  
 Julie Bennett JB (Vice-Chair of Governors)  
 Claire Crawshay CC  
 Will Clements WC  
 Rebecca Orford RO  
 Lesley Allgood LA  
 Daisy Sutcliffe DS  
 Fiona Webb FW  
 Claire Smith CS  
 Will Defoe WD

**Apologies:**

No apologies

**Absent:**

Alan Gall AG

**In Attendance:**

Christopher Perry-Yates CPY (Governance Professional)  
 Laura Knight LK (Assistant Headteacher, Saxlingham)  
 Anne Fry AF (Associate Member)

Item No.	Item and discussion	Owner	Target Date
1.	<p><b>Register of attendance and apologies:</b></p> <p>The register of attendance was signed.</p> <p>No apologies had been received.</p> <p>It was noted that Alan Gall was absent and the Chair of Governors advised that he had indicated that he would be stepping down at the end of the summer term.</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that the meeting was quorate.</p>		
2.	<p><b>Declarations of pecuniary interests:</b></p> <p>There were no pecuniary interests declared for items on the agenda.</p>		
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting on 23 May 2022:</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 23 May 2022 were reviewed and approved as an accurate reflection. The minutes were digitally signed by the Chair.</p> <p><b>Proposed: CC    Seconded: CS</b></p>		

4.	<p><b>Matters arising:</b></p> <p>The action list from the previous meeting was reviewed.</p> <p>It was agreed to carry forward the following action:</p> <p><b>ACTION: Upload curriculum monitoring reports.</b></p> <p>All other actions were agreed as completed.</p> <p>The headteacher advised that he had been in contact with County to advise them that the MI sheet relating to asbestos had been discussed at the previous meeting.</p>	RO	18/07/22
5.	<p><b>Items for Any Other Business:</b></p> <p>There were no items of other business declared.</p>		
6.	<p><b>Chair's actions:</b></p> <p>There were no Chair's actions undertaken since the previous meeting.</p>		
7.	<p><b>Headteacher's report:</b></p> <p>The governing board reviewed the headteacher's report. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>The headteacher highlighted that pupil numbers were changing quickly which was positive.</p> <p><b>Q (RO): What is the procedure when staff are on long-term sickness?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> This has been covered partly by Premier Sports and through additional hours by internal staff. Staff are entitled to six months on full pay and then after that would go down to half pay. Discussions are underway for a potential phased return to work.</p> <p><b>Q (CC): Ofsted had been said to mark a school down due to split year groups; was this a risk to either school with curriculum exposure?</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> This sounds like an issue with curriculum coverage and ensuring progression through the year groups. It is easier in single year classes to ensure progression, but we ensure in mixed year group classes that each part of the curriculum leads children on to the next stage in their learning. We need to be able to demonstrate that all children receive the same quality of education. Subject leaders were monitoring activities to ensure that there is clear progression and build plans for curriculum development. Subject leaders have been asked to focus on English, Maths, Science and EYFS initially. Staff were speaking to children which would lead the to a line of enquiry so that we have a clear picture of how the curriculum progression is taking place.</p>		

	<p>Q (AF): You say that full attendance analysis will be completed before the end of term – is there a target you are hoping to reach? Is attendance improving for Persistent Absentees (PA)?</p> <p>A: Yes, attendance is improving including in PA. Figures are more where they should be. Even with unauthorised absence it is not impacting too much on figures. Some of the persistent absentees who have had poor levels of attendance pre-covid have been exacerbated by the pandemic. We use Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) where necessary and we choose the right time to offer to support families and involve agencies, although this is not always welcome.</p> <p>Q (AF): How are we against the national average?</p> <p>A: It is lower than anticipated but it was expected to return to normal next year.</p> <p>Q(WD): At Preston the Reception / Year 1 teacher has resigned and this is the third time in almost as many years – is there a trend or reason for this? Do we have any concerns in terms of continuity for children?</p> <p>A: In this case the teacher was not actively looking to move. There are other schools in the same situation with late resignations. We have looked to move things around and use an existing member of staff, but this is not possible. The situation is not ideal, and we would like parents to know who their reception teacher is.</p> <p>Q(WD): Have you decided on the split of year groups across the two schools?</p> <p>A: Yes, the structure will remain the same as it is in the current academic year. This will be communicated to parents in the near future.</p> <p>Q (RO): Do we conduct exit interviews for members of staff moving on? If so, do we retain the information to look for trends?</p> <p>A: I am assuming that there haven't been exit interviews before. This is something that we can do moving forward.</p> <p>Q (RO): Do you need governor involvement in the recruitment?</p> <p>A: Yes. The closing date is 29 June 2022, and I will contact the governing board for governor assistance.</p> <p><i>[Will Clements joined the meeting at 7pm]</i></p> <p>Q (JB): Do we have staff capacity to support and ECT?</p> <p>A: Yes we have the relevant experience to support.</p>		
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	<p>Q(DPY): Is it likely that the drop of 4 pupils on roll for 22/23 is likely to increase by September? In terms of numbers, the greatest hit appears to be in Saxlingham reception class. What are the reasons for the 3 pupils leaving Saxlingham and the 1 at Preston?</p> <p>A: It is difficult to predict this. One child is moving out of area from Preston; the 3 children from Saxlingham are transferring to Norwich School. We knew of one of these moves in advance.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Although the attendance figures look stable, persistent absence remains high. Although the attendance figures have improved slightly with national average of 89% is it felt likely that we will get back to pre-covid numbers of 94% + next year?</p> <p>A: Yes. Attendance in recent weeks is more reflecting of normal times, even with a small number of pupils taking term-time holidays (unauthorised in all but exceptional circumstances).</p> <p>Q(DPY): What more can we do to address PA as a school. Are we getting any external support from the Attendance Officer?</p> <p>A: Fixed Penalty Notices are issued as necessary. It has been previously difficult for schools to balance the need to convey the message to be cautious about school attendance where pupils experienced symptoms of COVID whilst maintaining that good attendance is vital for the best pupil outcomes. It would seem a sensible time to send out new communications for parents setting out information about good attendance as we move into a new, and hopefully more optimistic, academic year as far as COVID is concerned. In normal times, I would seek to offer support to PAs in a timely fashion by making contact and offering appropriate support (e.g. if a child is regularly ill, then a referral to School Nursing Team to try and get to address any potential underlying medical issues).</p> <p>Personally, I am slightly uncomfortable with 100% attendance certificates etc. as it is not anyone's fault if a child has a couple of days off with sickness, etc. I do not believe this to be a motivator for persistent absentees.</p> <p>We are not currently receiving any specific support from Attendance Officer; I contact him as and when I have a query or require support and advice.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Rechecks - How far off were the children in Y2 from achieving? Were they SEN and or Pupil Premium?</p> <p>A: Phonics Saxlingham Recheck Scores Y2 (pass mark 32): 26 (SEND) 24</p>		
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	<p>Phonics Preston Recheck Scores Y2 (pass mark 32):  31 (SEND)  37  32 (SEND)  31 (PP)  29 (SEND)  30  19 (SEND)  23 (SEND)</p> <p>Q(DPY): When is the closing date for the Yr/1 teacher vacancy? Have the school received any approaches from potential candidates?</p> <p>A: Closing date is Wednesday 29th June. I have received 1 application so far and a number of approaches to look around the school.</p> <p>Q(DPY): When will the internal advert for the office team be going out internally?</p> <p>A: It was advertised yesterday with 7 days before closing date.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Is this the one identified in earlier reports?</p> <p>A: No, a different email. A staff member accidentally sent an email to the wrong recipient; both had the same first name. Contact was made immediately, and the risk minimised. MW logged this with DPO.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Do the subject leaders in both schools get a chance to get together to compare findings?</p> <p>A: Yes, this is encouraged, and is a suggested activity to be used during release time.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Is there any indication of costs from JC Comtech for any remedial work required?</p> <p>A: No, I am still awaiting contact. Further to my report, JC Comtech have informed me that their findings should be shared with me in the next week or so.</p> <p>The headteacher advised that the staff teams were pleased with the results of the Finance Audit and the auditor had been impressed with many aspects of practice. The action points that were given were felt to be fair; there was work to do on the asset register and many of the other smaller items were focused on the need to revisit the Finance Policy to ensure that the schools were maintaining practice that was workable and ensured compliance. The headteacher commended the school staff for their hard work.</p> <p>The headteacher highlighted the costs for the potential upgrading to the school website. The governing board noted that the preferred option was</p>		
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	<p>to have a Federation landing page with two separate sites for each school on one content management system.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that the school should proceed with option 3 to update the school websites as highlighted in the headteachers report.  <b>Proposed: CS    Seconded: DPY</b>  <b>All voted in favour with no abstentions.</b></p>		
8.	<p><b>Safeguarding report:</b></p> <p>The governing board reviewed the safeguarding section of the headteacher’s report.</p> <p><b>Q (RO): Did volunteers receiving induction documents include members of FOPPS (Friends of Preston School) and FOSS (Friends of Saxlingham School)?</b></p> <p><b>A:        This is something that can be introduced.</b></p>		
9.	<p><b>IT Security:</b></p> <p>The headteacher advised that he had met with JC Comtech who were collating responses to the findings of the IT audit. Governors were advised that the headteacher had been in contact with other schools who had been involved in the audit and had received similar recommendations.</p> <p>It was noted that there were some operational issues with Two Factor Authentication (TFA) and this would be discussed further when the JC Comtech report was received.</p> <p>The governing board noted that there were other implications relating to the physical servers and there would be the need to investigate the option of having virtual servers. It was not felt that there would necessarily be additional expense.</p>		
10.	<p><b>Resources reports:</b></p> <p><b><i>Budget Revision 1 (BR1)</i></b>  The governing board reviewed the draft BR1. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p><b>Q (CS): Would the minibus be able to take all the children that we currently take swimming?</b></p> <p><b>A:        Yes, but it would need to be in smaller groups. We could take 15 or 16 children in one go who could have a whole hour rather than just 15 minutes.</b></p> <p><b>Q (CS): Where will the money come from in future years for running costs?</b></p> <p><b>A:        We put the running costs into the budget. It costs a lot for a coach each time we attend events so when you add up what it is costing</b></p>		

for transportation in other ways it is offsetting the cost. If in two years we decide we do not want the minibus we could trade it in again.

Q (FW): What is a trial budget?

A: Within our system we have the ability to run a trial budget which doesn't change the original budget but allows you to try changes to see what the impact would be.

Q(DPY): Line E01 Teaching Staff - what % of salary increase has been built in over the 3 years. I understand that Unions have asked for 11% which is not unusual, but it is rumoured to end up at 3%.

A: We are guided by the LA on this one; we believe it is 3% but would have to check with the FSO to be sure.

Q(DPY): Line E01 Teaching Staff - this line has been increased by £12.4k does this reflect new staff.

A: It is a combination of the estimated pay increase and that we budgeted for an MPR6 teacher in Reception where our current Reception teacher would have been on MPR3 in Sept 2022. This was to give us the flexibility to appoint the best candidate, however, the trial budget reflects the difference if we were to appoint an ECT on MPR1.

Q(DPY): Line E02 Supply Staff - this dropped by £2k so can we assume the high risk of needing supply has reduced.

A: We have reduced the supply staff (NCC staff) budget slightly because we are proposing for GR to be out of class all week, however, this is on the understanding that she covers some supply to offset her current 0.2 teaching responsibility. The agency supply line (non NCC staff) also reflects this too.

Q(DPY): Line E13 Grounds Maintenance- this is increased by £2.2k why has this happened? Subsequent years it drops to just over 4k which is lower than the original budget figure than this year.

A: We had originally budgeted £2k to renovate the Preston wildlife area. We have now allocated £2,017 from Sports Funding for this purpose and a further £2,212 to Saxlingham for a climbing frame, again from Sport Funding. This has come about as we have sport funding to be spent by the end of term (the rest of the Sport Funding is going towards the minibus, if approved). The budgeted amount then reduces as these are one off projects that will only require basis maintenance once completed.

Q(DPY): Line E16 Energy - I understand that this years energy cost are based on an increase of 113% for oil and 95% for gas. Electricity does not increase until year 3 as we are on a fixed term contract. Can

schools group together for bulk buy oil? I am assuming pressure will be put on government to give a one-off energy fund to help school out this year.

We are not aware of any school groups for buying oil. We are hoping that you are correct about the Government supporting schools to fund this extreme price rise. We will update you if we hear anything.

Q(DPY): E19 Learning Resources (not ICT) - this shows an increase of £21.3k. What is the reason for this? The original Budget was £37K and year 2 was dropped to £30k and year 3 was dropped to £23K. If you have increased this year's budget to £58.6 K is year 2/3 realistic or has there been a journal movement as line E27 has a reduction of £22K.

A: This is a one-off payment for a mini bus. Please note that, in looking to answer this question, we noticed we had not removed the swimming coach (transport) hire for future years (subj 34950). This will reduce the expenditure by £3,200.

There has been movement between E27 and E19 due to the proposed minibus purchase.

Q(DPY): E27 Bought in professional services (curriculum) - as mentioned in question 6 this has dropped by £23K. Why is this? It now stands at approx £24K but in year 2 it drops to £16K and in year 3 to £13K.

A: This is due to the proposed minibus purchase using the Sport Funding carry-forward which needs to be spent by the end of this school year. Overall there is a significant shortfall in year 3 of £38K which will need to be addressed.

We noticed an error in the donations line in income, which has added £1,000 to that line. We also took out the swimming coach transport costs of £3,200 because of the minibus purchase. We have also had two additional pupils confirmed to join Saxlingham in September 2022. The combination of these changes has made the revision and trial budgets look healthier in year 3 and reduced the shortfall in Rev 1 to approx. £7000 and the trial budget is now in surplus.

The trial budget shows the best-case scenario versus Rev 1 being the worst-case scenario. We cannot confirm the figures until we have recruited the new teacher and know their pay scale. It looks highly likely that the LAC children will be joining us, and arrangements are being made to this effect.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** that Budget Revision 1 should be adopted.

**Proposed: CC    Seconded: RO**

**All voted in favour with no abstentions.**



	<p><b>Finance Audit Report</b></p> <p>The governing board agreed that this had been discussed under the previous agenda item. It was noted that the audit had been successful with no major concerns highlighted.</p> <p><b>Minibus quotes</b></p> <p>The governing board reviewed the three quotes for a school minibus. A copy of the quotes had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>The headteacher advised that the Sports Premium funding needed to be spent by the end of the year to avoid clawback and this represented good value against the costs of hiring external coaches.</p> <p>Q (FW): What is the latest date that the funding needs to be spent?</p> <p>A: By the end of summer term.</p> <p>Q(WD): Do we have a safe space to store the minibus over night?</p> <p>A: We can park in the car park at Preston and there is lockable space at Saxlingham after hours.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that the headteacher should proceed to investigate the best available option for a minibus within the £20k budget set.  <b>Proposed: DPY Secoded: CS</b>  <b>All voted in favour with no abstentions.</b></p>		
11.	<p><b>Ethos reports:</b></p> <p><b>SIAMS Strand 2: Wisdom, knowledge and skills</b></p> <p>The governing board noted that a whole board training session on SIAMS had been attended by most governors. A copy of the training materials had been circulated on GovernorHub. The Chair of Governors highlighted that the training had covered the need to create a summary SIAMS SEF and reduce the vision to 50 words.</p> <p>Q (CC): What feedback had Jon Moule given about the John 10:10 vision, given that this is the Church of England vision?</p> <p>A: There was nothing specific about this and advised that this was the choice of the school.</p> <p>Governors agreed that there was a need to revisit the Christian vision to soften it and make it easier for children articulate it. It was also agreed to relaunch the vision in September each year so that parents understood the school vision. The headteacher advised that there had not been many opportunities to welcome parents into the school due to the pandemic and it was hoped that there would be more opportunities in the next academic year.</p>		

	<p><b>Q (RO): Is the school still progressing the sensory gardens to meet the spiritual needs for the children?</b></p> <p><b>A: This would be investigated.</b></p> <p>The Chair of Governors advised that there was a company called Greener Growth that worked with schools to create greener spaces.</p> <p>The headteacher advised governors that the school was supporting children with SEND, mental health issues and the disadvantaged to ensure that they lived life in all its fullness. It was agreed that the school should put case studies together to show how the children were supported. It was noted that the intent of the curriculum started with the vision and articulating what that meant.</p> <p><b>Q (CC): At the last SIAMS it highlighted the lack of prayer space at Saxlingham Primary, had anywhere been identified for this? Would the sensory garden be a good alternative to this?</b></p> <p><b>A: Yes, this would be looked into.</b></p> <p><b>Q (RO): Do we still have the labyrinth at Preston and how is that being used?</b></p> <p><b>A: The labyrinth needs to be looked at and potentially relaunched. We need to create quiet spaces at Preston for children to use for reflection.</b></p> <p>Governors were advised that the reflection area at Saxlingham Primary had been refurbished to provide a sanctuary for the children. Governors commended the TA who had developed that area.</p>		
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Staff wellbeing:</b></p> <p>The Executive Headteacher advised that teaching staff were currently writing reports and external moderation was also taking place. It was noted that there had been weeks where the staff meetings had not taken place to provide time for teachers to write up their end of year reports.</p> <p>Governors noted that all the usual end of year activities were taking place including end of year performances. Day trips were also taking place. The events were proving very successful.</p> <p>Governors commended the staff for their hard work.</p> <p><b>Q(DPY):Is there anything that the governing board can do to support staff?</b></p> <p><b>A: Just acknowledging the hard work. We are very grateful for the paying for tea and coffee. It is the small things that help to show that staff are recognised.</b></p>		

13.	<p><b>Governor CPD:</b></p> <p>AF advised that she had attended training on Pupil Premium which had been very helpful.</p> <p>RO and DPY advised that they were booked to attend Performance Management training.</p> <p>DPY had attended the Race and Ethnicity Group meetings and a workshop regarding the Education White Paper.</p> <p>It was agreed to investigate monitoring for governors training.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Chair of Governors to contact Norfolk Governance Service to arrange whole group monitoring training.</b></p> <p>Governors discussed having a launch of the vision in the local church as whole school and community events.</p>	DPY	18/07/22
14.	<p><b>Governor monitoring:</b></p> <p>FW advised that she was meeting the maths leads in both schools and had booked to attend governor monitoring training.</p> <p>AF advised that she had held conversations with the SENDCo and a meeting was planned for later in the summer term.</p> <p>LA advised that the Singe Central Record (SCR) had been checked at Saxlingham and Preston Primary.</p> <p>EYFS monitoring was planned for September.</p> <p>DS advised that a monitoring visit would be planned to discuss stakeholder engagement.</p>		
15.	<p><b>Governing board correspondence:</b></p> <p>There had been no correspondence received.</p>		
16.	<p><b>Policy review:</b></p> <p>The following policies were reviewed:</p> <p><b>a) Administration of Medicine</b></p> <p>Q (CS): At Saxlingham the inhalers are locked in the classroom, is this acceptable?</p> <p>A: We can review this to see if any changes are needed.</p> <p><b>b) Disclosure and Barring Service</b></p> <p>There were no questions.</p>		

	<p><b>c) Intimate Care</b> There were no questions.</p> <p><b>d) Lone Working</b></p> <p>Q(DPY): Paragraph 6.1 talks about construction site, docks etc. Should this be more school specific?</p> <p>A: The extraneous examples can be removed.</p> <p>Q(DPY): If you are a lone worker and there is not a good mobile signal, what can be done to address this is if there is a concern?</p> <p>A: This varies depending on the situation and network provider. Anyone lone working needs to be aware of this.</p> <p>Governors suggested that an App called Peoplesafe could be investigated. The headteacher advised that staff notified him if they were in the school at weekends or during the holidays.</p> <p>Q (RO): In 7.3 it talks about using the school for one-to-one meetings; is it routine that there would not be a one-to-one meeting if there was only one member of staff in the building?</p> <p>A: I cannot think of a time where that would be the case.</p> <p><b>e) Recruitment</b> There were no questions.</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> that the policies should be ratified and adopted by the governing board. <b>Proposed: RO Secoded: CS</b> <b>All voted in favour with no abstentions.</b></p>		
17.	<p><b>Any other business:</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>		
18.	<p><b>Items deemed confidential:</b></p> <p>There were no items deemed confidential.</p>		
19.	<p><b>Reflection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed the cost for the minibus.</li> <li>• Upgrading and building better websites to showcase the schools.</li> <li>• Taken the vision forward which would benefit all children on both schools.</li> <li>• Discussed clarifying the vision to help the children to articulate it.</li> <li>• Talked about the development of reflection areas and sensory</li> </ul>		

	gardens which will benefit children and adults.		
<b>20.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> 18 July 2022 at 6.30pm.		

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

**Actions:**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Action Description</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
4	Upload curriculum monitoring reports.	RO	18/07/22
13	Contact Norfolk Governance Service to arrange whole group monitoring training.	DPY	18/07/22