



Tas Valley Church Schools Federation

Preston CE VC Primary and Saxlingham Nethergate CE VC Primary

Full Governing Board Meeting

Monday 7 November 2022 at 6.30pm, via [Microsoft Teams](#)

Minutes

Diane Perry-Yates DPY (Chair of Governors)
 Matthew Walker MW (Headteacher)
 Katie-Rose Lightfoot KRL
 Rebecca Orford RO
 Claire Crawshay CC
 Lesley Allgood LA
 Daisy Sutcliffe DS
 Fiona Webb FW
 Claire Smith CS
 Will Defoe WD
 Anne Fry AF

Apologies:

In Attendance:

Christopher Perry-Yates CPY (Governance Professional)

Item No.	Item and discussion	Owner	Target Date
1.	<p>Register of attendance and apologies:</p> <p>The register of attendance was signed.</p> <p>No apologies had been received. All governors were in attendance.</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that the meeting was quorate.</p>		
2.	<p>Declarations of pecuniary interests:</p> <p>There were no new pecuniary interests declared.</p>		
3.	<p>Governing board membership:</p> <p>The governing board reviewed the current membership against the constitution.</p> <p>After an interview with the Chair of Governors it was formally proposed that Katie-Rose Dyble should be appointed as a Co-opted governor.</p> <p>Proposed: DPY Seconded: MW</p> <p>All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p>		

4.	<p>Election of officers:</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that there had been one nomination received for the role of Chair of Governors.</p> <p>a) Vice-Chair of Governors The Chair presided over the election of Vice-Chair of Governors.</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that there had been no nominations received prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that the post would be held open until any governor expressed an interest.</p>		
5.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting on 3 October 2022:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 3 October 2022 were reviewed and approved as an accurate reflection. The minutes were digitally signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed: CS Seconded: RO</p>		
6.	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>The action list from the previous meeting was reviewed.</p> <p>It was clarified that a member of the team was covering cleaning for two hours per day.</p> <p>It was clarified that the link governor for EYFS, Early Reading and Phonics would be DS.</p> <p>It was agreed to carry forward the following actions:</p> <p>ACTION: Add Pupil Premium impact statement to the next FGB meeting agenda.</p> <p>ACTION: LA and DPY to monitor the Single Central Record on 18 November 2023.</p> <p>The link governor advised that she had attended the schools for EYFS monitoring. A report would be submitted for upload to GovernorHub.</p> <p>ACTION: LA to upload EYFS monitoring report to GovernorHub.</p> <p>The headteacher advised that the Home School Agreement had been circulated to all new parents. It was agreed to upload the agreement to the website and signpost parents to the document in the bulletin at the beginning of each academic year.</p> <p>All actions were noted as completed.</p>	<p>CPY</p> <p>LA, DPY</p> <p>LA</p>	<p>05/12/22</p> <p>18/11/22</p> <p>18/11/22</p>

7.	<p>Chair's actions:</p> <p>There had been no Chair's Actions since the previous FGB meeting.</p>		
8.	<p>Executive Headteacher's report:</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 Executive Headteacher highlighted the strong attendance figures. Governor commended the strong attendance figures.</p> <p>Q(WD): Do we monitor staff absence levels?</p> <p>A: Informally we do keep an eye on absence levels on an individual case by case basis. This is something that can be reported.</p> <p>It was highlighted that there had been a positive response to the return of a teacher following maternity leave. Other staff had returned following illness.</p> <p>Q (RO): Is there a formal process in terms of staff absence such as certificating and thresholds before further action is taken?</p> <p>A: There is a school policy which follows the County model policy.</p> <p>Q (RO): How are the Deputy Headteacher SENDCo duties being covered during their absence?</p> <p>A: I am picking these up at the moment. The diocese and County have been approached for any form of temporary support, for example for one day per week. There were a number of headteachers locally who had offered support and advice. There were some staff who had been SENDCo's previously, however, this would create teaching sessions that need backfilling. We are doing our best to ensure that the children are not disadvantaged.</p> <p>Governors were advised that an additional member of staff was due to undertake Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).</p> <p>Governors noted the link to the draft staff survey in the headteacher's report. Governors commended the survey and agreed that the option to add a name to the survey should be removed. It was also suggested that a question relating to workload and physical environment would be a useful addition.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher highlighted that the Local Authority had written to the school categorising the school as Category B and a member of the County team had been allocated to the school to provide support. The Federation had been invited to take part in a peer-to-peer support network and had been partnered with the headteacher of Chapel Break Infant School.</p>		

	<p>Q(DPY): Had the issue with the ground's maintenance been resolved?</p> <p>A: This relates to an issue at Preston where the contractor has not met the terms of their contract. There would be a further update at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Governors received an overview of Little Wandle phonics programme from the Executive Headteacher. A copy of the documents accompanying the presentation had been circulated via GovernorHub and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher advised that the school had needed to purchase new books to ensure that all books were fit for purpose for the teaching of phonics under the Little Wandle programme. There were two staff taking on a leadership role to establish a consistent approach to phonics in both schools. Some observation and moderation had taken place and pupils were already becoming familiar with the structure of the learning. Staff were using the Little Wandle resources to help them track children's progress.</p> <p>Q (CC): Do parents get sight of the Little Wandle resources?</p> <p>A: Yes. When they go to the website all resources are available for parents to download.</p> <p>Q (CC): Have you been able to afford all the necessary resources and books?</p> <p>A: Yes. We could do with purchasing some more in the medium term. It is quite difficult to know exactly what you need until you start.</p> <p>Q (DS): You mentioned that there were teachers from each school taking ownership?</p> <p>A: Yes, there is one from each school.</p> <p><i>[Anne Fry left the meeting at 7.31pm]</i></p> <p>The Executive Headteacher advised that there had been discussions with other schools who had adopted Little Wandle in the previous year. This was a useful way of sharing experiences and ideas. It was agreed to have a further update on Little Wandle at the Spring 1 meeting.</p>		
9.	<p>Safeguarding report:</p> <p>The governing board reviewed the safeguarding report and accompanying paperwork. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>		

10.	<p>Progress against School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP):</p> <p>The governing board reviewed progress against the SIDP 2022-23 which was included in the headteacher’s report. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>		
11.	<p>Executive Headteacher Performance Management:</p> <p>The Chair of Governors advised that the Executive Headteacher Performance Management had been undertaken and all objectives had been met.</p>		
12.	<p>Staff Performance Management Summary.</p> <p>The governing board reviewed the overall data capture form (F324d) from recent performance management. A copy of the form had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>It was noted that appraisal of support staff was being planned.</p>		
13.	<p>Finance items:</p> <p><i>Budget Revision 2 (BR2)</i></p> <p>The governing board reviewed the BR2 documentation. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Teaching staff on E01 has increased by £18.3k for this budget year. Can you confirm this is the 5% increase agreed by the unions?</p> <p>A: Yes. Our Finance Officer has confirmed this. Teaching staff will receive between 5-8% pay increase depending on their grade. For the majority of our staff, this will be 5%.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Does it also include pay progression?</p> <p>A: Pay progression has been included.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Year 2 rises by £50k approximately and Year 3 also rises by £17k. What % increases have been used for YR2 and 3?</p> <p>A: The % increases are automatically input by the LA, and this feeds through into our Budget Planner.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Supply staff E02 has risen by £2k in Budget Revision 2 but in YR2 and YR3 it is placed at £5k Is this realistic?</p> <p>A: Supply staff is split between two lines: E02 NCC supply staff and E26 Agency Staff.</p>		

	<p>Q(DPY): Agency Supply E26 has risen by £4k in BR2 but years 2 and 3 has £4k budget figure?</p> <p>A: E02 NCC Supply has increased by £1,000 per school due to long term sickness of a member of staff, who was due to cover supply for their 0.2 teaching commitment. There is a willingness from HLTA in both schools to cover teacher absence internally, however, this would only be used for short-term absences such as day one or staff CPD absence.</p> <p>Q(DPY): E26 Agency Supply Staff has been increased by £1,000 to £3,000 for each school but stays at £2,000 per school for future years.</p> <p>A: We anticipate returning to normal supply costs in future years. Wherever possible, we will seek to use HLTAs to cover teacher absence to reduce supply costs, e.g., first day absence or planned absence for training. There is a willingness from HLTAs at both schools to support in this way.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Support staff E03 rises £4.3k this year and £12k next year. What assumptions have been made for the increase in YR2? It only goes up by £6k in Y3.</p> <p>A: A planned pay award has been built into the budget but has yet to be finalised. We are also checking if additional support staff costs could be covered under Pupil Premium.</p> <p>Q(DPY): E12 Building maintenance increases by £5.3k this year. I note from the details the reasons (alarm upgrade at Preston, Saxlingham boiler and door repair). But is YR2 and 3 realistic?</p> <p>A: This is realistic. When we looked at this question again, we realised that these costs were input into the budget twice. Therefore, we have reduced E12 by £2000 to £2000. We would like to keep the Building Maintenance at £5000 and not reduce, due to the likelihood of ongoing repairs based on recent experience.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Cleaning E14 has risen this year due to sickness cover but drops by £400 YR2 and 3?</p> <p>A: This is because our cleaner at Preston cleaned the carpets herself rather than engaging an external contractor. This is also something that we will look at as a capital project as several carpets are soon requiring replacement.</p> <p>Q(DPY): Learning resources E19 rises by £5.8k some of which is Little Wandle but not all. YR2 and 3 drops considerably. Can you advise and is it realistic?</p> <p>A: Little Wandle resources require initial outlay but not an annual cost. We are looking to reduce expenditure on homework books in future years.</p>		
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Q(DPY): E25 Catering supplies has dropped this year by £1500 approximately but left the same for years 2 and 3. Why is this?

A: This is purely based on the update on the day of the October census.

Q(DPY): E28 increased by approximately £1.5k in this budget year but drops by £3k in YR2 and 3. Is this realistic?

A: Yes. A member of staff has requested a 50% reduction in hours from Christmas 2022. Also, the Finance Audit cost of £890 is within the current budget as a one-off cost but will not be repeated in future years.

Q(DPY): Years 2 and 3 are negative what can be done to address this?

A: As discussed with WD and DPY, Diana will look to create a brief plan showing details of how we will seek to address the annual deficit. This will consider:

Staff costs - is the current structure for management, teaching and support staff the most efficient it could be? How can the structures be streamlined and improved, both financially and in terms of efficiency, whilst maintaining outcomes for pupils?

How can we make more effective use of the Pupil Premium, Covid Catch Up & Sports Premium funding (i.e., use it to fund some staff costs where appropriate). We have already begun to do this, and this has removed the deficit in Y2. However, we need to check this with our Finance Officer, but she is on holiday until the end of the month.

Any further economies of scale we can generate from being a Federation, e.g., by moving to @tasvalley staff email addresses, we may be able to achieve reductions by subscribing as a Federation. This would also be more indicative of being one organisation.

Investigating how can we maintain and increase pupil numbers. There are still small classes in each of the schools so there is capacity in some classes for more pupils.

It was noted that Budget Revision 2 had been revised further and uploaded to GovernorHub, however it was agreed that it was not possible to agree BR2 as further clarification was needed before finalisation.

The link governor highlighted the fact that BR2 showed a large deficit in year 3. It was highlighted that the impact of staffing salary increases, and energy inflation were the main factors driving the change and the school was spending on average £70k more than revenue each year. Year 3 showed a deficit of £131k. It was noted that all schools would be in a similar position and there was a need to look at cost savings and

efficiencies whilst maintaining the quality of education for the children.

Q (RO): What benefit do we get from the solar panels at Preston?

A: We get some benefit from the solar panels.

It was agreed that a realistic plan should be compiled as soon as possible to show how the budget could be balanced to ensure that the school was operating within its financial means.

Q (RO): Do we need to consider a more aggressive marketing strategy to market to new parents?

A: We can consider flyers to the local community and new housing developments. The main concern was the intake numbers at Saxlingham.

Q (FW): Was there any indication of how many parents were attending the Saxlingham prospective Parents' Day?

A: There had been ten expressions of interest. Some parents liked the small nature of the school; however, the school needs to remain viable, and it is a delicate balance.

Q (FW): What is the main competition for Saxlingham?

A: Stoke Holy Cross and Hempnall.

It was agreed to set up a marketing working party. It was noted that it was important to market as a Federation to sell the benefits of the school collaboration. It was agreed that with the closure of Tasburgh pre-school there was a danger of families drifting further afield when looking for a school. It was also agreed that the use of social media would be powerful as well as advertising the availability of spaces at Saxlingham to counteract a concern by prospective parents that the school was constantly oversubscribed.

b) Summer RAG rating

The governing board reviewed the Summer RAG rating. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.

It was noted that the school was rated Amber 1.

c) Preparation for SFVS, KYB and SIC

It was agreed that WD would contact the school office to arrange completion of the SFVS, KYB and SIC.

d) Discuss plans for financial benchmarking

It was agreed that the Executive Headteacher would access the View my Financial Insights website for benchmarking data.

	<p>e) Anti-fraud checklist It was agreed that the school would investigate the need to complete the checklist.</p>		
14.	<p>Ethos and SIAMS:</p> <p>a) Review and assess arrangements for parent consultations / surveys The governing board discussed the creation of a parent survey. It was agreed to create a customised online parent survey.</p> <p>ACTION: Headteacher and Chair of Governors to arrange a working party to discuss a parent survey.</p> <p>It was agreed that a small group of governors should arrange to visit the school to capture the pupils voice through face-to-face discussions.</p> <p>b) Receive feedback from first Parent Forum The Chair of Governors advised that the first parent/carer forum had taken place and focused on the Federation websites. Some useful feedback had been received and adjustments made in response. A further meeting was planned for the new year.</p> <p>c) Discuss a termly newsletter or article from governors It was agreed that governors should submit articles to the school newsletter.</p> <p>d) Develop and/or contribute articles to local parish magazine / community It was agreed that governors should submit articles to the parish and community school. It was noted that there were opportunities to raise the profile of the schools. Governors suggested using links through scouts, brownies and beavers.</p>	MW, DPY	12/12/22
15.	<p>Governor CPD:</p> <p>It was noted that AF, DS, FW and DPY had attended Governor Monitoring in a Church School.</p>		
16.	<p>Governor monitoring:</p> <p>There had been no monitoring since the previous meeting.</p>		
17.	<p>Governing board correspondence:</p> <p>There had been no correspondence since the previous meeting.</p>		
18.	<p>Policy review:</p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and approved:</p>		

	<p>a) Home School Agreement There were no questions. Proposed: CS Seconded: FW All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p>b) Pay Policy There were no questions. Proposed: WD Seconded: CS All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p>c) Paternity Scheme There were no questions. Proposed: DS Seconded: CC All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p>d) Performance Management Policy Q(WD): Can the Pay Policy be updated in paragraphs 17.1 and 17.2 as well as adding the pay scales to Annex 3 and 4. A: This would be updated. Proposed: WD Seconded: LA All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p>It was agreed that DPY, WD, CC, FW and RO would form a pay committee. ACTION: Chair of Governors to set up a Pay Committee.</p> <p>e) Early Reading and Phonics Policy Q (KL): Can the word vulnerable be changed in the Early Reading and Phonics Policy? A: This is a phrase that is used in education. Proposed: WD Seconded: LA All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p>		
19.	<p>Any other business: There was no other business.</p>		
20.	<p>Items deemed confidential: There were no items discussed that were deemed as confidential.</p>		
21.	<p>Reflection: how have discussions today helped the children and school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working party to help people know more about the schools. • Looked at the school budgets. • Shown that the governing board are serious about canvassing opinions of parents and staff. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signalled the intention to capture the pupil voice. 		
22.	Date of next meeting: 12 December 2022 at 6.30pm Preston Primary.		

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Actions:

Item No.	Action Description	Owner	Target Date
6	Add Pupil Premium impact statement to the next FGB agenda.	CPY	05/12/22
6	Monitor the Single Central Record.	LA, DPY	18/11/22
6	Upload EYFS monitoring report to GovernorHub.	LA	18/11/22
14a	Arrange a working party to discuss a parent survey.	MW, DPY	12/12/22