



Tas Valley Church Schools Federation

Preston CE VC Primary and Saxlingham Nethergate CE VC Primary

Full Governing Board Meeting

Monday 27 February 2023 at 6.30pm, via [Microsoft Teams](#)

Minutes

Diane Perry-Yates DPY (Chair of Governors)
 Matthew Walker MW (Executive Headteacher)
 Katie-Rose Lightfoot KRL
 Claire Crawshay CC
 Rebecca Orford RO
 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)
 Laura Knight LK (Assistant Headteacher)
 Jo Firman JF (Acting Assistant Headteacher)
 Gabrielle Limon GL (EYFS Teacher, Saxlingham)
 Sammy Maclennan SM (EYFS Teacher (Preston))

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>Feedback from Early Reading Audit:</p> <p>Governors were advised that the process overall had been very positive and despite Little Wandle had been delivered for only just over a term it was embedding well. It was noted that there had been a lot of work to implement Little Wandle since it had been introduced.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the lesson that had been observed had been commended and had been reported as a positive lesson. Governors noted that changing the way phonics was taught had been challenging and it was rewarding to have the schools work validated by VNET.</p>		

Governors were advised that there were clear strengths in Key Stages 1 and 2 as well as the foundations set in Early Years. Clear steps forward had been identified. EYFS teaching staff at both schools had been praised for working so closely together.

The Executive Headteacher explained that the Federation was ensuring that full training and support was in place for staff in the delivery of Little Wandle. This had been recognised and validated by VNET during the audit.

Governors were advised that the schools were putting resources together on the advice of VNET to support the Year 3 children who had not passed the Phonics testing.

Q (FW): Are the schools getting enough support from parents?

A: We have delivered phonics workshops for parents at both schools to introduce Little Wandle and explain about the reading books that go home. Previously the children had gone home with books that were quite challenging, however, with Little Wandle the requirement was for children to be able to read 90% of the books before they go home. Parents were very positive about the impact on their children. A parent survey was also being planned to obtain parent voice about Little Wandle. We are confident that parents will have seen rapid progress.

Q(DPY): What were the webinars that the school had engaged in?

A: We have contacted a book author who had offered a webinar for the children in Key Stage 2. The auditor had talked to other parts of the school to identify how they engaged with reading.

Q (AF): How often will this type of review happen?

A: This is dependent on the school. VNET is an advisory service independent of the LA and we can buy into professional development along with a set number of credits which we have chosen to spend on reviews such as this. This was an area that we felt would be beneficial to have external validation, especially as it is new.

Q(KRD): Are you delivering drop-in clinics for Little Wandle support?

A: We started the academic year with whole staff Inset focusing on Little Wandle. There are some staff with performance management targets in Little Wandle as it is a new initiative to most people. Further CPD will be made available.

The Executive Headteacher advised that all staff were being given a working knowledge of Little Wandle so that the process and principles were understood in Key Stage 2.

	<p>Governors commended the strong working relationship demonstrated by the EYFS teachers at both schools.</p> <p><i>[Sammy MacLennan and Gabrielle Limon left the meeting at 7pm]</i></p>		
4.	<p>Governing Board membership:</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that the term of office of Lesley Allgood as a co-opted governor was due to expire. It was formally proposed that Lesley Allgood should be re-elected as a co-opted governor. Proposed: FW Secoded: DPY All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that the term of office of Will Defoe as a co-opted governor was due to expire. It was formally proposed that Will Defoe should be re-elected as a co-opted governor. Proposed: CS Secoded: MW All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p>The Governance Professional advised that the term of office of Claire Crawshay as a DBE Foundation governor had expired. It was noted that an application form for a renewal of term had been received and the Governance Professional agreed to ask the diocese to renew without a break of service once CC had returned the form.</p>		
5.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting on 23 January 2023:</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 23 January 2023 were reviewed and approved as an accurate reflection. The minutes were digitally signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed: WD Secoded: CS</p>		
6.	<p>Matters arising:</p> <p>The action list from the previous meeting was reviewed.</p> <p>It was agreed to carry forward the following actions:</p> <p>ACTION: Monitor the Single Central Record.</p> <p>All other actions were noted as completed.</p>	DPY, LA	31/03/23
7.	<p>Items for discussion under Any Other Business:</p> <p>There were no items declared.</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>Q (FW): Was the issue with After School Club (ASC) related to Preston?</p> <p>A: Yes. Both schools run a Breakfast Club and neither of these are at capacity. We were notified that Jack in the Box Nursery would not continue offering after school care and parents have asked us if we would run the provision. Currently there is very little demand. Discussions are underway with other cluster headteachers to identify alternative provision. There were implications with cost of staffing, location and provision of food.</p> <p>Q (FW): Would this influence parents when choosing a school?</p> <p>A: I have spoken to both other local schools and others are closing their after-school clubs. Stoke Holy Cross buy in an external provider to run their club. It would be easier if parents were able to commit to a set number of days.</p> <p>Q(KRD): Had Springboard at Saxlingham been contacted as they had previously talked about after school provision?</p> <p>A: We can make contact with them to investigate further.</p> <p>Q (DS): How does the Breakfast Club run, and can it be replicated at the end of the day?</p> <p>A: It is run within the school and numbers are so low that we only have one member of staff running the club. It is not impossible to run it at the end of the day, but it is complicated. The children need something constructive to be doing and a space to be in. It works better when there is a permanent space for them. The other issue is staffing and those that run the Breakfast Club may not want to work longer hours at the end of the day.</p> <p>Governors were advised that there had been previous investigations into after school provision at Saxlingham, however it had not been cost effective.</p> <p>Q (DS): Can we extend the sports club provision?</p> <p>A: This could happen but there is a cost to the school for that which comes from sports premium grant funding.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher advised that a meeting had taken place with the local incumbents who were still keen on the John 10:10 biblical foundation. Further work would be undertaken with children, staff and parents to gain an understanding of their feeling about the vision statement.</p> <p>ACTION: Governance Professional to add Curriculum Audit to the next FGB agenda.</p>	<p>CPY</p>	<p>17/04/23</p>
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	<p>Governors noted the lower attendance in Ladybirds Class at Preston and Owl Class in Saxlingham. The Executive Headteacher advised that there were on or two children with low attendance in Owl Class who were skewing the data.</p>		
9.	<p>Safeguarding report:</p> <p>The governing board reviewed the safeguarding report section of the Executive Headteacher 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>		
10.	<p>Finance reports:</p> <p><i>Budget Revision 3 (BR3)</i> The governing board reviewed BR3. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>It was noted that the budget position was stronger than at BR2 with a surplus in all three years, although the surplus was reducing each year. The Executive Headteacher advised that schools had received additional school funding as part of the government’s recent announcement of an additional £2bn for schools.</p> <p>The EHT advised that the surplus had been reduced slightly following a higher-than-expected Norse catering contract quote.</p> <p>Q (RO): Had the school decided not to gain further quotes for catering?</p> <p>A: Norse had delayed sending in their quote which limited the ability to gain further quote, however, the new contract was only for a year and further investigations would be made into preparing the food for both schools in the kitchens at Preston Primary.</p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED that Budget Revision 3 should be adopted and submitted.</p> <p>Proposed: KRD Seconded: RO All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p> <p><i>School Financial Value Standards (SFVS)</i> The governing board reviewed the completed SFVS. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>It was noted that the return was similar to the previous year with some amendments reflecting the new governance structure.</p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED that the SFVS should be adopted and submitted.</p> <p>Proposed: DPY Seconded: CC All voted in favour with no abstentions.</p>		

	<p>Financial Benchmarking It was noted that the benchmarking was included in the SFVS</p> <p>Latest Financial RAG rating The governing board reviewed the latest RAG rating. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>Governors commended the Green rating.</p> <p>Q(WD): Was the school having to compromise on resources?</p> <p>A: No, although we are looking for good value for money.</p>		
11.	<p>Pupil Premium attainment and progress data:</p> <p>The governing board reviewed the Pupil Premium data analysis for both schools. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>The Chair of Governors advised that she had compared whole school data and Pupil Premium data to identify any gaps.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher advised that a new set of whole school assessments was underway for the Spring term and further analysis would be available prior to the next FGB meeting.</p>		
12.	<p>Parent evening arrangements:</p> <p>The Chair of Governors advised that a parent questionnaire had been devised for delivery at the parent evenings at both schools.</p> <p>Governors discussed plans for attendance at the parent evenings:</p> <p>Saxlingham – Mon to Fri (6 to 10 March) with the majority of parents on the Tuesday (3.30pm to 6pm).</p> <p>Preston – Tues and Thurs (7 and 9 March 3.30pm to 6.30pm).</p>		
13.	<p>SIAMS, Vision and Ethos:</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher advised that a visit had been arranged with Chris Allen to discuss RE provision.</p> <p>It was noted that there was still a backlog in SIAMS inspections and it was likely</p> <p>It was noted that the recent VNET audit report had highlighted the need to review the RE curriculum. The Assistant Headteacher from Saxlingham advised that the curriculum had been mapped against Understanding Christianity and the external visit was arranged to</p>		

14.	<p>Governor CPD:</p> <p>KRD advised that she had started the Safeguarding for Governors training.</p> <p>DPY advised that she had undertaken Safeguarding Refresher, GDPR training and Cyber-security training.</p> <p>CC advised that she was booked to attend Introduction to SIAMS Schedule for Governors.</p>		
15.	<p>Governor monitoring:</p> <p><i>Behaviour monitoring - Preston</i></p> <p>The governing board reviewed the behaviour monitoring report submitted by the link governor. A copy had been circulated prior to the meeting and can be found filed with these minutes.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the deep dive day method of monitoring had worked very well and staff found it a positive experience. Governors recorded thanks to the staff for making them feel welcome.</p> <p>A monitoring visit was planned at Saxlingham Primary on 27 March 2023.</p>		
16.	<p>Governing board correspondence:</p> <p>The Chair of Governors advised that a letter had been received from Revd Dawn thanking the Chair of Governors and Executive Headteacher for their meeting to discuss the school vision.</p>		
17.	<p>Policy review:</p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and approved:</p> <p>a) Finance Policy</p> <p>The policy was reviewed.</p> <p>Q(WD): Budget Revision 3 - this shows an improvement in our financial position which is excellent. What are the key changes that have led to the improvement for this year and in the outer years?</p> <p>A: Essentially, key changes have been additional funds delegated by the government to cover increased costs.</p> <p>1(WD): I believe we have access to £26k for a Capital Energy Grant - what can we usefully spend that money on in both schools?</p> <p>A: We are currently looking in this but have been advised that it can be used for any energy saving purchases such as energy efficient light bulbs, sensor taps/lights, etc. solar panels.</p> <p>Q(WD): Finance Policy - the references to the Finance Committee in the document will need to be updated as the Committee no longer</p>		

	<p>exists. The Policy needs to be clear on where authority to approve certain financial decisions rests now we don't have a Finance Committee. Do they all need to go to FGB or can Diane and myself approve certain things?</p> <p>A: I will make the changes regarding the finance committee. Thus far, Diane has called a 'chair's action' where necessary.</p> <p>Q(WD): The Finance Audit in the summer raised some points about increasing approval limits to help avoid operational bottlenecks. Has the Policy been adjusted to take account of those points?</p> <p>A: Yes the policy has been adjusted to increase the limit to £1000.</p> <p>b) Suspension and Exclusion Policy The policy was reviewed.</p> <p>It was agreed that a definition of term would be useful for parents and that Fixed Term Exclusions should be referred to as Suspensions throughout.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the definition of parents / carers would also be helpful at the start of the policy.</p> <p>It was agreed to confirm the policy via GovernorHub once the changes had been made.</p> <p>c) Health and Safety Policy and commitments It was noted that the commitments of the governing board were not clear enough to understand and needed to be personalised to each school to include some of the procedures.</p> <p>ACTION: CS to liaise with MW to update the Health and Safety Policy and Commitments.</p> <p>d) Parent and Carer Code of Conduct The policy was reviewed.</p> <p>Q (DS): I was a little unsure of the definition used for 'parents' in section 1.14. Should this be parents/carers? To me, reading the definition of a parent as being anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders) seems odd. My child-minder would be my son's carer when he's in her care, but not his parent.</p> <p>A: I think the policy is trying to convey the expectations of behaviour of any adult on site who is collecting a child/representing a child at an event, etc. Is there a better way of making this clear?</p> <p>Q (DS): In relation to the comment above, should we use the term parent/carers consistently throughout the policy? At some points it says parents and at some points it says parents/carers.</p> <p>A: It should be consistent in terms of parent/carers.</p>	CS, MW	03/03/23
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e) Recruitment and Selection Policy

There were no changes.

f) Computing and e-Safety Policy

It was agreed that a list of definitions would be helpful for parents and that online safety and e-Safety needed to be used consistently.

g) Maths Policy – Saxlingham

There were no questions or comments.

h) History Policy – Saxlingham and Preston

i) Geography Policy – Saxlingham

There were no questions or comments.

j) Primary Languages Policy – Saxlingham and Preston

There were no questions or comments.

k) PE Policy – Federation

This had not been submitted and was still under review by SLT.

l) Art Policy – Preston

There were no questions or comments.

m) Art Policy – Saxlingham

There were no questions or comments.

n) DT Policy – Federation

This had not been submitted and was still under review by SLT.

o) EYFS Policy - Federation

There were no questions or comments.

p) Music Policy – Preston

There were no questions or comments.

q) Music Policy - Saxlingham

There were no questions or comments.

Q (CC): Are the policies different due to a different approach at each school?

A: This was a choice of staff.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the above policies should be adopted subject to the changes agreed.

Proposed: RO Secoded: CC

All voted in favour with no abstentions.

	The Executive Headteacher advised that there were English and Science policies being drafted for the next FGB meeting. Q (RO): Would all the policies be linked to on the websites? A: Yes.		
18.	Any other business: There was no other business.		
19.	Items deemed confidential: There was one item discussed which was classified as confidential and recorded as a Part 2 Confidential Minute. ACTION: Governance Professional to circulate Part 2 Confidential Minutes prior to the next FGB. <i>[Lesley Allgood and Claire Smith left the meeting at 8.23pm]</i>	CPY	17/04/23
20.	Reflection: how have discussions today helped the children and school: • Due to time constraints this item was not covered.		
21.	Date of next meeting: 24 April 2023 at 5pm, Saxlingham Primary		

Meeting closed at 8.44pm

Actions:

Item No.	Action Description	Owner	Target Date
4	Monitor the Single Central Record.	LA, DPY	31/01/23
8	Add Curriculum Audit to the next FGB agenda.	CPY	17/04/23
17	Liaise with the Executive Headteacher to update the Health and Safety Policy and Commitments.	CS, MW	03/03/23
19	Circulate Part 2 Confidential Minutes prior to the next FGB.	CPY	17/04/23