

Hovingham & St Hilda's, Ampleforth CE Primary Schools' Federation
Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body of the Federation held at
Hovingham
Monday March 21st 2016

Present:

<p>James Pynn (Head) Mark Wilson (Chairman) Jane Holloway (Vice Chairman) Victoria Forrester Sallie Harland Johanna Senior</p>	<p>Rosalind Garnish Jayne Conacher Lynn Lealman Freda Shaw Martyn Boothroyd Andrew Coulthard</p>
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In Attendance:
Helen Lowdell (Clerk)

Core Functions:

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

Meeting started at 5.30pm

Item	Minute	Action
FG/16/104	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A prayer was said by the Chairman. - The Chairman welcomed governors and introduced H Lowdell, the new clerk. 	
FG/16/105	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no apologies for absence. - J Conacher informed the Chairman that she would have to leave the meeting at 7.25. 	
FG/16/106	<p>Declaration of Interest & Items of Confidentiality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no declarations of interest made. - It was decided that no items should be treated as confidential. 	
FG/16/107	<p>Notification of urgent other business</p> <p>Governors agreed to discuss the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconstitution of the governing body in line with new regulations relating to federated schools. - Maternity cover for S Harland (in her role as governor). - Communication from the Bishop of Whitby [Chairman of the York Diocesan Board of Education] regarding academy conversion. 	
FG/16/108	<p>Public Minutes of the FGB held on 8th February 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors scrutinised the public minutes of the FGB meeting held on Monday 8th February 2016. <p>The minutes were unanimously agreed as a correct record and duly signed and dated to this effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidential minute FG/16/88 was tabled at the meeting. <p>The confidential minute was unanimously agreed as a correct record and duly signed and dated to this effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In reference to the confidential minute, J Pynn reported that he and M Boothroyd had interviewed an excellent candidate to cover this and that she 	

Signed..... (Chair) Date..... 1

	had been offered the job subject to references. J Pynn thanked M Boothroyd for his input.	
FG/16/109	<p><u>Matters arising from the previous minutes for which there is no separate agenda item</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (FG/16/95) J Pynn is due to speak to the IT consultant at NYCC to discuss exiting the current broadband contract in order to move over the BT. - (FG/16/102) J Pynn had contacted Smart Solutions to discuss cleaning and caretaking at St Hildas. <i>[Discussed in more depth during item FG/16/110]</i> 	
FG/16/110	<p><u>Finance and Premises</u></p> <p><u>Finance update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors were informed that Heather Leggett had been unwell and sent her apologies. H Leggett would be meeting with the North Yorkshire finance team the next day. Governors were reassured that there was still plenty of time for approval of the start budget at the next meeting. <p><u>Mandx proposal for the care and upkeep of the schools</u> <i>[The proposal and fee schedule had been circulated with the agenda]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - J Pynn introduced governors to a different way of dealing with building maintenance, as proposed by Mandx. He explained that the organisation has been working successfully with Thornton-le-Dale Primary School for the past three years. - The proposal involves a condition survey of the schools followed by monthly meetings. J Pynn felt that they would take on a vision of property maintenance that was more forward-thinking for both schools. <p><i>Q. Would the contract include general caretaking?</i> <i>A. Yes, it could. It could be a much more responsive service covering lots of areas from replacing door handles to Health & Safety etc.</i> <i>Q. How would it work after they'd been paid their initial fee to identify what is required?</i> <i>A. They would come back with recommendations and costings and the schools could decide whether or not to use them to carry out work.</i> <i>Q. Do they use their own contractors?</i> <i>A. They would source contractors locally wherever possible.</i> <i>Q. Would we still be meeting the criteria of finding proper quotes for work?</i> <i>A. Yes we would.</i> <i>Q. This seems like a significant cost. Have any other quotes been sought for this kind of work?</i> <i>A. Not by us but I know that Thornton-le-Dale found the Mandx quote to be very competitive and I value the judgement of the headteacher there.</i> <i>Q. How does it compare with what we have at the moment?</i> <i>A. It's a very different system. We currently pay £900 per year into what is essentially a type of insurance scheme. The service would be meeting the needs of the school and fits in with changing priorities. It would be wrong to view it as a way to save money but if we work with Mandx, it would give us more opportunity to plan.</i> <i>Q. How frequent are the surveys? [The presentation referred to both three-year and five-year plans of works]</i> <i>A. I would have to clarify that.</i> <i>Q. Would the fee be for just one school or for both?</i> <i>A. It would include both schools.</i> <i>Q. When can we come out of our current contract?</i> <i>A. December 2016.</i></p>	JP

	<p>Governors agreed to go ahead with Mandx subject to clarification on the frequency of surveys. Proposed: F Shaw Seconded: M Boothroyd</p> <p><u>Cleaning</u> - J Pynn is seeking clarification from NYCC about the current caretaking contract in light of recent issues, particularly at St Hilda's. Governors reported that cleaning standards are not high enough and identified communication problems between the schools and the cleaners. - J Pynn would find out more about the situation and report back at the next FGB.</p>	JP
FG/16/111	<p>Headteacher updates</p> <p><u>School Improvement Service</u> - J Pynn explained that Penny Vernon is the current School Improvement Advisor but that she would be replaced after this term due to her large workload. A meeting on 22nd March would identify her replacement. It was noted that J Pynn is extremely grateful for the extra support provided by Penny for both schools. Helen Davey would continue to have significant involvement with the schools. - Governors were reminded that the School Improvement Service report [circulated with the agenda] is a rolling document and were told to refer to the end of the document for the most recent information. - The next meeting with Penny Vernon would be on March 22nd to look specifically at vulnerable children. - Some of the most recent actions were already in progress. These include the Maths Action Plan, which has been seen by V Forrester and the School Development Plan, which has been re-written. <i>Q. There is a reference [on page 12] to members of staff taking part in observation and training. It states that not all staff members had taken part. Have they now been brought up to date?</i> <i>A. All members of existing staff have received the training and visits are about to be arranged for the two new NQTs.</i> - Governors were reassured that the newly appointed staff member would be working closely with S Harland, who would be keeping in touch during her maternity leave. J Pynn explained that NYCC were aware that they would be losing literacy specialists in both schools and that they were receiving extra support from the Esk Valley Alliance in this area. He also reported that the newly appointed staff member has very good literacy skills. <i>Q. One of the key actions [on page 14] is about raising the profile of maths across the school. Is there any progress on this?</i> <i>A. This is all part of the maths action plan. There is much in place, including new homework books, Sumdog [maths computer game], mathematics [online learning resource] and the NSPCC number day. We should see an impact of this in the future.</i></p> <p><u>LA monitoring visit</u> - Governors were told about a recent Local Authority monitoring visit - the report for this would be completed over Easter. The visit had been very positive and supportive and it was clear that progress had been made in terms of subject leadership and governance. Next steps would be specifically about demonstrating progress. For example, work has recently been done on KS2 pupils who are adrift and the impact of this work should be evident during the</p>	

summer term. It was noted that more pupils are on track and more are closer to being on track. A raising of expectations on presentation is necessary.
- The Chairman reported that Helen Davey described the governing body as being 'where they should be' and that she was very impressed with the number of governors attending extra meetings during her monitoring visit.

Maths Advisor visit

[Report circulated with the agenda]

- J Pynn explained that the Local Authority had offered time with literacy and numeracy advisors to work alongside subject leaders.

Q. Do subject leaders get to see these reports? I notice that they're not on the essential distribution list.

A. They don't see the full report, just the actions points. The exception to this is S Harland, who sees the reports as a governor.

Q. Can you update us on those two agreed actions? [see report]

A. Andrew Gee has adjusted the action plan and is working to develop the medium term plan so there has been progress on both action points.

Q. How does the 'pre-teaching' fit in?

A. It fits in where there is human resource and time available.

Q. What does it involve?

A. [For literacy] It might involve an introduction to some vocabulary or something that will be learnt the next day. It can be useful for some specifically identified pupils but the timetable is so full that it can be difficult to find time for it.

- V Forrester confirmed that the subject leader in maths was also finding it difficult to fit pre-learning in to the school day. S Harland explained that there is a need to ensure that the same pupils are not missing the same things over and over again.

Q. Do pupils ever miss playtime to take part in pre-learning?

A. No

Q. Does it have to be carried out by teachers or can teaching assistants help?

A. We are very lucky that Elaine [Owen] is a qualified teacher so she is able to support with this.

Q. How do pupils respond to pre-learning?

A. It varies. They sometimes struggle with it if they are tired at the end of the day.

- V Forrester explained that next term there would be a focus on data, which will give a clearer picture of the impact.

- There was some discussion about the removal of the levels system and its replacement with Age Related Expectations. J Pynn described the challenges presented by the new system in demonstrating attainment.

Q. Will this have a negative impact on data?

A. Yes it may well do and it will be more difficult to see where pupils are. Comment: There may also be a negative impact on the confidence of pupils.

Q. Is any of this accelerated learning being supported by parents?

A. There are general homework expectations but support is difficult for many of the parents [due to a lack of understanding in the subject area]. We have had parent workshops to help with this but it is proving hard to engage and take-up has been variable. We will keep trying.

Esk Valley Alliance visits, Hovingham

- J Pynn explained that the EVA team work with staff in the school during their visits and create a report each time to identify development. The focus is on

	<p>the school taking on Quality First Teaching and BAD learning (Basic, Advanced and Deep levels). It was later explained that the school prefers to use the terms Core skills, Breadth and Depth.</p> <p>Q. Have all the action points on the reports been implemented?</p> <p>A. Yes they have.</p> <p>Q. Are the staff finding the EVA support useful?</p> <p>A. [S Harland] Yes, I'm finding it very useful.</p> <p>A. [J Pynn] I know that some staff have found it challenging. It is supportive but can be seen as an extra pressure. Staff here want to do things right. They felt that they had been but the Ofsted findings have made them doubt themselves. It [EVA involvement] is supportive in terms of identifying next steps but planning takes longer.</p> <p>Comment: I understand that it can help staff to focus.</p> <p>Comment: I think it's important to celebrate the things that are going right in the school. The Ofsted report wasn't entirely negative.</p> <p>Comment [S Harland]: We are being told to do things differently but there are lots of fantastic ideas for us to adapt to working with our schools. Lots of schools are now advising each other through EVA. We can hopefully change St Hilda's for the good before Ofsted arrives there.</p> <p>Q. What impact is all of this having on staff morale? I know that governors have been put under increased pressure and it must be much more for staff.</p> <p>A. We have time to get out of Requires Improvement. For many staff members the extra support is very beneficial and has made them realise how much they want to do.</p> <p>Comment: As governors, we want to support staff. It's important that us being in the school isn't seen as another level of scrutiny.</p> <p>- There was some discussion about staff communicating ways in which governors can support them.</p> <p><u>Esk Valley Alliance visit, St Hilda's</u></p> <p>- Governors were told that all of the actions were being worked on and that staff members were responding well to the extra support.</p> <p>Q. There appears to be some concern about behaviour. Do we have an up to date behaviour policy in place.</p> <p>A. Yes we do. This is a serious issue as there are some pupils who don't yet have the right behaviour for learning.</p> <p>Comment [L Lealman]: The behaviour is improving and we're continuing to work on it with rewards systems. We're using specific language about attitude and children are responding well.</p> <p><u>SIAMS report for St Hilda's</u></p> <p>- Governors were told that St Hilda's was classed as 'Good' in all areas and that it was a very positive report. Governors were thanked for their support the Chairman commented that it was a positive experience.</p> <p>- A parent governor commented that it would be useful in future for parents to receive more formal information about the inspection so that they could have a constructive conversation with inspectors.</p> <p>- The clerk would email the report to governors.</p> <p><u>School Development Plan</u></p> <p><i>[The plan had been circulated with the agenda]</i></p> <p>Q. When looking at the RAG I can see that the marking and feedback policy [1.5] still needs work. Have subject leaders only got one week after Easter to make progress on this?</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
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	<p>A. It is something that many schools in the EVA still need to tweak. Castleton and Glaisdale have only just completed this. We will be working on feedback in the new term.</p> <p>- Governors were told that marking and feedback can be more complex for literacy than maths.</p> <p>Q. Is the planning format [1.3] still a work in progress?</p> <p>A. Yes. This document was circulated prior to recent involvement in classrooms but staff are still working on it. The removal of the levels system has made a difference and we're look at getting it to work for both numeracy and literacy.</p> <p>Q. There is a reference to parental consultation [2.10]. Have any parents come back to you with feedback about the reports?</p> <p>A. None. We are now using a new company to produce reports for parents, which will be particularly useful in maintaining consistency where there are two teachers for one class.</p> <p>Q. Is Parentview still being used?</p> <p>A. It is worth putting out another request. There is always a problem with St Hilda's because of the very low pupil numbers.</p> <p>- It was suggested that parents be reminded that two parents can report on Parentview for one child.</p>	
FG/16/112	<p>RIG</p> <p><i>[The minutes would be circulated after the meeting]</i></p> <p>- V Forrester read out the minutes of the report.</p> <p>- V Forrester was thanked for her work on the report.</p>	
FG/16/113	<p>Monitoring Visits</p> <p>- Governors were reminded that all monitoring visit reports should be submitted to the cloud. They were told that there are currently six or seven reports.</p> <p>- There was some discussion about accessing the cloud and governors were told that details about how to do so would be circulated very soon.</p> <p>- The Chairman commented that writing reports is a useful way to reflect and can develop confidence in asking the right questions. Governors were reminded to use the School Development Plan as a starting point for what to focus on.</p>	JP
FG/16/114	<p>Governor Training (Priority)</p> <p>- V Forrester and M Wilson has attended the latest SInS meeting and reported that it was a good way to talk to other governors.</p> <p>- A Coulthard, J Senior and R Garnish had all attended the Bite-Sized Finance training and reported that it was a useful, condensed course.</p> <p>- J Holloway thanked governors for sending back their skills audit and told them that the results had been sent out. It was reported that H Davey was very pleased that this had been done as it demonstrates that the governing body has collectively carried out a good deal of LA and Diocese training covering many areas. The uptake of training has increased confidence and this is reflected in the skills audit results. Governors were informed that the skills audit would be carried out on an annual basis.</p> <p>- J Holloway has compiled a new governor welcome pack. Governors suggested including letters from the children in each school and some information about the Christian ethos of the schools.</p>	
FG/16/115	<p>Safeguarding (Statutory Responsibility)</p> <p>- J Pynn told governors that the schools are continuing to work through the action points on the safeguarding audit.</p>	

	<p>- It was reported that the Ryedale Prevention team had been contact twice and that both instances had been resolved.</p>	
<p>FG/16/116</p>	<p>Policies (Statutory Responsibility / Core Function – Strategic Direction) <i>[All policies had been circulated with the agenda]</i></p> <p><u>NQT</u> Governors reviewed the document and unanimously agreed that the NQT Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>Anti-bullying</u> There was some discussion about the wording on page 2 of the policy and it was agreed that the wording should change from: “...the headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour is wrong and why a pupil is being punished” to “... why this behaviour is wrong and the consequences.” Governors unanimously agreed that, subject to this change the Anti-Bullying policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u> Governors reviewed the document and unanimously agreed that the Attendance Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>CPD</u> Governors reviewed the document and unanimously agreed that the CPD Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>Debt write-off</u> Governors pointed out a reference to the Finance and Personnel Committee. As this committee no longer exists it was agreed that the reference should be removed. Governors unanimously agreed that, subject to this change the Debt Write-off Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>Initial teacher training</u> Governors reviewed the document and unanimously agreed that the Initial Teacher Training Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>Staff code of conduct</u> Governors reviewed the document and agreed that the Staff Code of Conduct Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p><u>SEND</u> Governors were informed that the SEND policy had been slightly altered and that the alterations were highlighted. Governors reviewed the document and agreed that the SEND Policy should be adopted by the governing body.</p> <p>Proposed: F Shaw Seconded: J Senior</p> <p><i>J Conacher left the meeting at 7.25pm</i></p>	

Actions			
Item ref	Action	Timeframe	Name
FG/16/110	Clarify frequency of Mandx surveys	By 25 th April	JP
FG/16/110	Investigate cleaning situation	By 25 th April	JP
FG/16/111	Email SIAMS report to governors	ASAP	Clerk
FG/16/113	Ensure all governors have instructions on accessing cloud	ASAP	JP
FG/16/117	Research re-wording and re-submitting Instrument	By 25 th April	Clerk
FG/16/117	Approach staff to find replacement governor for S Harland	By 25 th April	JP