



Taw Valley Federation



A meeting of the Full Governing body was held on Monday 14th December 2015 at 7.15pm at High Bickington Primary School.

Present: Rob Norton (head), Sally Anoyrkatis (chair), Rob Foster, Sue Wells, Helen Carn, Mike Clark, Heather Dunn, Colin Parsons, Peter Lake (from 7.23pm), Briony Parsons (associate), Verity Lunn (clerk).

Meeting started 19.17.

MINUTES

1. Opening Prayer & Welcome. (MC/SA)

SA welcomed all to the meeting. MC led the opening prayer.

2. To receive, and if appropriate, approve apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Jane Adams and approved as at the September meeting.
Apologies received and approved from Adrian Wells and Amy Suchacki.

3. To declare any business interests arising from the agenda and remind governors of meeting confidentiality.

SA – as an associated director of Chulmleigh Academy Trust.

4. To approve minutes of previous meetings (16.11.2015)

Part one minutes were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
Part two minutes were circulated, read, agreed and signed.

5. Matters arising from the minutes.

None

(At this point in the meeting, PL arrived.)

6. Head's report

This had been circulated in advance. RN gave an overview of all parts.

RN stated Pupil Premium attendance figure for Witheridge was incorrect due to miscommunication regarding information required – actual figure slightly lower than target.

SA: good to see Pupil Premium attendance higher in HB.

RN: Educational Welfare Officer involvement in Witheridge for relevant pupils. RF asked what EWO was/did. BP explained process of EWO involvement and how this was intended to improve attendance, also the importance of keeping an eye on attendance for safeguarding reasons as could be indication of something else.

Recurring illnesses as reason for absence would also need to have involvement – in these cases the child would need medical intervention.

RF – thought that the threat of a fine was not actually going to make much difference.

BP – what is more effective is that EWO is then heavily involved.

SW – level of parental responses to Ofsted questionnaires disappointing in both schools with regard to parental involvement.

RN – will be another push with newsletter etc.

RN – staff covering well for absence of staff with broken ankle – child concerned still doing well, and the absence of the individual support staff not affecting interaction with classmates.

7. Portfolio report: Wellbeing and Christian Care (SW/MC) including SIAMS report.

SIAMS report was not available in time for a portfolio report on it for this meeting.

ACTION: VL to place on agenda for January.

SIAMS report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

HC: not much different to the feedback that they had in last meeting before report.

SW: comment about values not being embedded – she queried how progress was going on the adoption of the values. Was it going out to parents?

RN: SIAMS inspector had recommended keeping within the values for life, also keeping it within the school. They had values chosen by the family groups across the schools – Charlotte Wannell and RN to choose the final five values.

SA: felt the report read better than feedback that was given on the day.

SA: how was ethos group (with Morchard Bishop) going?

RN: original meeting had to be cancelled due to illness, rescheduled meeting yet to happen. Will be looking to bring in key governors in future meetings.

CP: Does RN feel that the report was about right?

RN: yes, felt very fair and thorough. Lots of things they are currently doing to improve that are based on the report, including environment.

SW: Is there anything from reading the reports that governors would like her and MC to focus on for the portfolio report?

SA: difficult to pick up one thing.

RN: suggested picking up on staff competency. Had ordered new resources for use in collective worship.

SA: will have talk to decide on areas.

8. Feedback from monitoring committee.

SA gave brief feedback from the earlier committee meeting – looking at writing books/quantity of books/feedback. Were some positive things but were improvements needed, also consistency needed to improve.

Recap of action points from mock Ofsted – lot of progress especially with regard to behaviour. Lots of things moving in right direction, just need to make sure these are happening fast enough for children to get to right stage at end of year six.

9. Safeguarding update

To be placed on agenda every term – not talking about specific cases, but to talk about a general overview of any issues over the federation.

RN reported on plan to put up (over Christmas) a safeguarding noticeboard to be highly visible – showing that it is a high priority in both schools. All governors/staff to read summary document on ‘keeping children safe in education’ and sign sheet to say that this has been done. To be re-read each year.

RN reported that safeguarding records are kept accurately and are up to date. All staff know MASH number to call to make report if necessary.

SA: How many child protection cases currently open across federation?

RN: None at child protection level currently. Three last year now been de-escalated – to ‘child in need’ level. Staff do still make the enquiries/through RN. If child makes disclosure to staff, whoever it is will listen/deal with it. Then write all down and either escalate themselves, or goes to appropriate level of staff member.

ACTION: VL to send out summary document to governors.

ACTION: VL to place on agenda each term.

10. Finance: Finance monitor; approve spend on canopy (class 2 WPS)

Image of proposed design circulated to governors.

BP reported £15,950 was the original quote, which had been negotiated down to £14,350.

Also quote for covered area to class one/ preventing heat loss due to free flow movement of children - £5,500. This would allow doors to be kept open, and potentially be a replacement for the current big canopy.

Update since budget monitor produced – water board agreed to refund cost of water leak, so bottom line would remain the same.

Governors approved both these items.

11. Review governor competencies (SFVS) and Governor training updates (governor feedback from any training undertaken – including online. Please bring copies of any certificates/feedback forms)

VL had done Babcock training course Clerk as Administrator.

12. Approve policies:

Teaching and learning – new policy produced titled ‘learning’ – CP recommended that title be reverted as phrase all were familiar with, also as what was on the Babcock list of policies so would be what people were looking for. Governors agreed the policy, with the title to be changed back to ‘teaching and learning’.

ICT – governors agreed pending review in February after input from staff following training.

Assessment and Recording – governors agreed pending review in February after input from staff following training.

Home-School Agreement – will be amending when values have been decided (in new year). Governors agreed, with the addition of the federation vision to the document.

Prevent radicalisation – approved.

Flexible working – Governors agreed – option chosen for ‘delegated responsibility’ – FGB.

ACTION: VL to amend policies as agreed.

13. Matters brought forward by the chair

SA: Item regarding learning community/five school co-operative trust.

Political agenda from government at moment for moving to academy trusts. Discussion on this at last co-op trust meeting. The heads of these schools had been to meeting about academies within co-op trust, which had opened up discussion on the possibility of moving to a five school academy. This needed to go back to governing bodies for discussions.

Meeting with Chulmleigh Academy Trust – Chulmleigh are keen to open up conversation with the five schools.

SA asked for any thoughts.

SW: understood went down road of federation to avoid having to go to acadamisation. Had issue with going into acadamisation with some non church schools as understood one governing body – how to keep Christian values?

SA: yes would be one accountable governing body. It is an option to have separate governing bodies, but it creates more work/ is harder to make work (but still only one centralised accountable governing body)

BP: action points from the co-op trust meeting was governing bodies discussing amongst themselves, next co-op trust meeting would have outside professionals coming in to give different options to the trust on what they could do. This should add some clarity/drive.

PL: how would this work with budget?

BP: central budget, but can choose to portion out to different schools.

SW: what would happen with headteachers?

SA: difficult issue to get over with five schools, finding the right leadership structure would take discussion.

CP: who will be at the meeting in January?

BP: heads and representative of each board of governors.

SA: it is no longer a case of whether they do anything, will be case of what they do, as they will need to do something. Needed a bit of a steer of governor feeling towards what options they were open to. Possible option of opening discussion with Chulmleigh, discussion of how they worked it, rather than only discussion on basis of joining them.

RF: would benefits of federation with regard to sharing staff expertise still apply to academy as it currently does with federation?

RN: yes.

HD: how would support from county be affected if became an academy?

RN: Can still buy in, but is a higher cost.

BP: Now beginning to have to buy in a lot more rather than being given support , so services are being lessened anyway, as the more schools that academise there are less maintained schools – no longer viable for county to provide so much.

SA: At Chulmleigh meeting they were talking about how there would be a tipping point in the country when there were so many academies that maintained schools would cease to be viable.

PL: felt that was hard to give opinions to SA, as they did not fully know what all the options were.

SW: asked when the next TMLP meeting was, was there time for governors to find out information to feedback before next FGB?

SA: Next TMLP meeting on day of next FGB meeting.

RN: felt very important not to dither along to state of being imposed on what would happen, rather than the school itself being able to choose what happened to it.

CP: felt that they needed to look at what information was around, and if came across anything then to share to all governors.

MC: what currently happening is that governors had to do something, so current working is what is the best thing that they can do.

MC had document from diocese on church schools federating – need to consult with diocese first.

ACTION: MC to forward document to VL to distribute to governors.

HD and BP left. 21.16

14. PART TWO: Staffing

Minutes for this section are kept separately.

Meeting ended 21.52

Dates of future meetings (and associated portfolio)

18th January 2016 (W) - Learning and curriculum, (NEW) Wellbeing and Christian Care portfolio report on SIAMS inspection.

22nd February 2016 (HB) - Achievement and Standards/Mini report covering everything, including SEND and Pupil Premium

21st March 2016 (W) - Finance

18th April 2016 (HB) - Learning and Curriculum

16th May 2016 (W) - Wellbeing and Christian Care

20th June 2016 (HB) - Finance Leadership/management part of SIP. {Use of outside space/environment within school.}

18th July 2016 (W) - Achievement and Standards, SEND, Pupil Premium and overall.