

## Taw Valley Federation



A meeting of the Full Governing body was held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at Witheridge Primary School.



Present: Sally Anoyrkatis (chair) Helen Carn, Jane Adams, Rob Norton (head), Adrian Wells, Peter Lake, Sarah Fast, Amy Suchacki, Heather Dunn, Colin Parsons, Sue Wells, Verity Lunn (clerk)

### MINUTES

Meeting started 19.05

**1. Opening Prayer & Welcome.**

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

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

Apologies received from Mike Clark and accepted.

Noted appointment of new parent governor from Witheridge – Phil Asson – SA/VL currently working on arranging his induction.

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

SA as associate director of Chulmleigh Academy Trust.

**4. To approve minutes of previous meeting (18<sup>th</sup> April 2016 – previously circulated)**

Minutes of FGB meeting 18<sup>th</sup> April agreed and signed.

Minute of meeting with St Christopher's MAT 27<sup>th</sup> April agreed and signed.

**5. Matters arising from the minutes**

*Governor/leadership responsibilities - 'who does what' document*

SW explained the document had come from a training module she had completed. She felt it would be a useful exercise for all governors, especially for those who were new/felt unclear.

Governors went through and completed the sheet individually.

SW went through the correct answers, explaining what the responsibilities should be (see accompanying sheet). Governors had some discussion over points where they had put a different answer to those on the sheet. Governors agreed it did highlight the importance of the governing body.

SA also distributed Devon Association of Governors' 'Fit for Purpose' quiz – to be looked at for a future date. She had noticed that prevent training had not been done – RN could lead this as he had been on the training. **ACTION: VL to place on future agenda (20m)**

SA – governors had previously talked about doing a governor audit. She had contacted Babcock about doing this – was all day, they would talk to the head and some governors, look at paperwork and draw up an action plan. Cost £585. RN reported that he had previously been part of the process at a different school, and found it to be very useful. Governors agreed to do this. **ACTION: VL to arrange date with Babcock.**

*Governor self-audit (previously circulated)*

SA reminded governors to complete self-audit exercise. **ACTION: VL to e-mail out sheet again for governors that had not previously returned these.**

*Terms of reference for portfolio holders*

SA reminded governors that these needed to be worked on.

## **6. Learning and Curriculum portfolio report (SF/JA)**

Governors had received the report.

JA talked through what they had done – they had chosen an area of school improvement plan, and the questions on the report were lifted from the action plan.

As a way forward – SF/JA would like to visit both schools to discuss with children what they knew about assessment procedure. SF/JA also to meet with RN to discuss the missing bits of improvement plan and how this would be dealt with in the next year.

RN responded to the questions on the report:

*Are pupils aware of what they must do to succeed as a result of assessments being made? Do they know what they need to improve on and how to do so? Are they given sufficient time and opportunity for self and peer assessment?*

RN – this is easier now as hold benchmarking meetings between equivalent teachers to ensure consistency (moderation). Also benchmarking between schools in the Two Moors Learning Partnership and also externally.

JA – was RN part of the benchmarking meeting to know this?

RN – no, but got reports from them.

JA – so more a case of subject coordinators reporting back?

RN – more a case of reporting back on key stages/classes

HD – RN good at checking up on this to ensure.

*Are pupils given opportunities to use and apply core skills, knowledge and understanding? Is this carefully assessed?*

RN – this is covered in the benchmarking meetings.

JA – would it be worth setting a calendar in the same way governors set a calendar so they can know in advance when they are doing this?

RN – there is a system for making sure these happen.

*Do LoL have the depth of knowledge required to look for evidence of Using and Applying in the core subjects to make assessment judgements beyond the objectives for the current lesson?*

RN – not done within the federation, but they have been to these over the TMLP.

JA – as an example of a subject leader, did HD feel that she had a firm handle on literacy across the whole federation?

HD – had very firm knowledge at HB, not so much at Witheridge, but her role across HB – Witheridge was a different one – subject leaders were school specific.

HC – would it be an advantage to have one across the federation, or is it better as two?

RN – went for two as so much information that they have to give out. External advisors have been doing some visits where they visit both schools in one day, so can accurately compare them.

*How has planned CPD and working with colleagues impacted on raising standards?*

JA – when they had gone in last year had talked to children who were very knowledgeable about the assessment process – felt that those in particular would have been able to feedback what they thought would improve the process for them.

RN – not yet consistent over the two schools with this – Witheridge is catching up with HB in terms of pupil knowledge and using assessment process. Currently at the point where they needed to start to think of assessment policy for this.

SA – felt that linked to this it would be useful to do another monitoring committee visit to look at books, to see if this had improved since their last visit.

**7. Governor visit/training updates (governor feedback from any training undertaken – including online. Please bring copies of any certificates/feedback forms)**

Noted 'who does what' quiz counted towards training – VL to keep with training records.  
JA had done online GEL module – 'key functions of a governing body'.

**8. (Assessment data/summary of teacher observations based on two week action plan (RN))**

Brief overview given of data, linked to what teacher action plans had been.

RN handed round group data (see additional sheet). Percentages were given of children at or above age related by year group, with indications of whether these percentages were rising or falling. RN stated it was the usual caveat that a child might not show as being at age related, but could be only slightly below.

SA – so if downwards arrow, it's not that children have gone backwards, but that they haven't made the necessary progress?

RN – also the children in a year group might be different as children leave/join the school. David Chaplin had visited HB, the overall data looks promising for good should it be inspected imminently.

Wetheridge – overall reading was a relative strength, writing and mathematics low, which reflects weak progress in the past.

Looking at books they had noticed that in class 4 at Wetheridge he could see clear progress from the last visit, and also can see progress across each unit of work.

Next visit was the 29<sup>th</sup> June – David Blower and Andrew Riley, 12<sup>th</sup> July next Mock Ofsted type visit. This Friday Andrew Riley coming in for mid-term review.

SA – there were some worrying figures in the data.

HC – Wetheridge Y6 maths especially worrying.

SA – even where an improvement in percentage, sometimes the current percentage was not actually very good – eg year five Wetheridge writing – 21% to 32%, which is still very low. Also worrying considering the level of intervention that had been put in place.

HD – is it worth saying anything about teachers' understanding of the TI/Mastery etc. spectrum at this point?

RN – Do need to have a lot of evidence there. Very broad spectrum of 'emerging' which covers a lot. Some things will even out at the end of the year.

SF – felt that pupil premium figures at Wetheridge looked disappointing.

AW – is this where the federation will be looked at and told we're not making effective use of pupil premium grant?

RN – in terms of data there yes, but then do have to look at children in terms of where they came from.

CP – overall they are disappointing. He felt not a disaster because know where problems come from.

SA – problem is that the progress out of these problems is not being made quickly enough.

SF – how do they ensure that this progress is made?

RN – may be helpful to talk to teaching staff about this. What he looks for is that children are very clear about what their next steps are – that children don't waste any time, eg. working in short bursts so don't have time to 'drift off'.

HD – as subject leaders, they have decided to talk to teachers about the pupil premium children in their class on a termly basis, on how they are doing, if they are not improving then what is being changed about their support to help them to improve.

SA – get impression that they are looking at children on a more frequent basis than this.

RN – yes, he tends to head to those children when he goes into the room so constantly monitoring.

RN – Have put in place that teachers are doing more small group work involving these children.

SA did feel needed more than action plans, as they were only working very slowly.

RN – felt something about being both the person who was instigating change and judging it afterwards was a strange thing – he had arranged for Jo Diamond (LA advisor) to come in and do the CPD with the staff, and RN would be the one afterwards to judge how these were working.

SF – so are putting extra measures in?

RN – yes. Felt that staff would agree he was also being more ‘nagging’ about the changes that they had agreed would work.

JA – does he think that the attitude towards learning had changed in the older classes at Witheridge?

RN – yes – didn’t think that the children talked as confidently as they did in HB, but that is because they hadn’t been doing it for so long.

HC – what happened with Y6 maths between autumn and spring?

RN – thought that there would be more hitting the level needed in the SATs tests than the percentages showed, problem due to the broad spectrum needed before given judgement of ‘towards independence’.

SF – remembered about discussing importance of TAs – had they also improved their knowledge of this new curriculum?

HD – felt the answer to this was yes, they were also part of the benchmarking meetings. The standards in the SATs tests this year for year sixes were interim standards whilst transferring to the new curriculum. However the Babcock assessment sheets that they had been using (for the data) were based entirely on new curriculum, which was a higher level.

SA – so hopefully Y6 results would be better than this data?

HD – yes, although the rest are judged entirely on the new curriculum.

SA – they had been talking a lot about the year six children at Witheridge, but also worrying that the year fives hadn’t benefitted from the extra attention they would have when the year sixes were taken out for intervention.

RN – Not always learning literacy/numeracy in these afternoons.

SA – are they still looking out for opportunities within these sessions though?

RN – yes, but until covered something in core lessons they cannot completely apply it in other subjects.

Compared to other schools may even be being slightly ‘mean’ about how they are judging.

SA – but can’t just say that about Witheridge when also saying having benchmarking to ensure same across two schools.

RN – it’s about finding opportunity for children to show what they have learnt, so not a surprise that children in Witheridge have a lower percentage than HB given the history.

SA – yes, but still need to improve this so they do.

RN – need to be getting so children are really clear about what they need to be doing. The school are not alone in this.

SA – not alone, but fact that they have a very easy comparison with another school that is doing better she felt it was harder to say that.

AW – the question he worried about was have the children been let down?

SA – clearly year six have been let down over their time in the school, but she is worried about whether they have been let down in the last year – could they have done anything more?

RN – it is why they are being so firm on what needs to be put in place.

HC – felt concern about the results in year four. Is this worrying as they are going into upper key stage two?

RN – since they have left year two, that year group have had seven different substantial teachers, which has clearly had an effect on them.

HC – need to try to ensure they are now consistent for the rest of their time at school.

## 9. Part II: Staffing

20.38 HD and AS left. Meeting moved to part II.

21.01 meeting moved back to part I. HD and AS returned.

## 10. Part I: TTMLP/LLC update – academisation/school visits

SA – reminded governors of meeting with Diocese Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>. Will talk about where governors feel they are currently are in terms of making a decision. Would like to think that they would make the decision at that meeting, but aware it may not happen, will have to see at the meeting. Can certainly discuss this.

Felt it was now a good opportunity to prepare for next week's meeting and make sure governors were all updated.

TMLP – three other heads came and met with RN, SA and SW – putting case forward for how they could provide support within the five schools, trying to show how the future could lie within five schools. Gave a mini action plan with time scales/costs. Felt more positive than last TMLP meeting, more open about trying to support Witheridge, although she felt not quite pitching at right level – pitched at if not aware of what was going on.

Also since then there had been a slight shift in government policy over MATs – felt that other schools in TMLP were happy about that, so probably wouldn't be a short term option for a MAT anyway.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust – Steve Baber had had another meeting with SA – nothing really new out of that. SB had asked MJ to put together a generic action plan on what they would do with a newly joined school in difficulties. Also approaching other heads from schools in TMLP to get unified position to present to TVF about why they should remain in the LLC when joining a MAT.

Had recently heard of a possible fourth option for a MAT (Part II as not yet public knowledge)

Meeting moved to part II 21.09

Meeting moved back to part I 21.42

CP left 21.42.

AW – it may be useful to ask the diocese if they would protect to some extent if they got forced in academisation so they didn't have to go into option that they really didn't think would work.

**ACTION – VL to send governors list of exactly what voting would be to make clear for governors.**

Discussion over what stage of the federation joining a MAT would be acceptable for the DfE.

**11. Matters brought forward by the chair.**

None.

Meeting ended 21.49.

**Dates of future meetings (and associated portfolio)**

**24<sup>th</sup> May 2016 (HB)** – meeting with representatives from the Diocese.

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

**18<sup>th</sup> July 2016 (W)** - Achievement and Standards, SEND, Pupil Premium and overall.

DRAFT