



MINUTES OF THE FEDERATION GOVERNING BODY MEETING		
Date:	13th December 2023 at 5.30pm	
Venue:	St. Philip's CE Primary School & Zoom	
Present	Jess Kippen (JK) Gavin Shortall (GS) Andrew Gait * (AG) Joanna Gait * (JG) Joanna Hill (JH) Hilary Jones (HJ) Rita Kumar (RK) Lynda Newton (LN) Kathreen Shahbaz (KS) Lori Stewart * (LS) Caroline Whelan (CW)	Co-opted governor/Chair Ex-officio governor/Executive Headteacher Diocese foundation governor Ex-officio (Holy Innocents) foundation governor Diocese foundation governor PCC (Holy Innocents) foundation governor LA governor PCC (Holy Innocents) foundation governor/Vice Chair Ex-officio (Ascension) foundation governor Parent governor Staff governor
In attendance	Anne Marie Fahy (AMF) Sandra Jamieson (SJ) Jo Westhead (JW) Kim Spooner	Federation Business Manager Head of School (St. Philip's) Head of School (St. James) Clerk

* present for part of Item 1 onwards.

The meeting met its quorum (8/6) and started at 5.35pm.

AGENDA ITEM 1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Discussion	Apologies had been received from JB, DC and MC. The Chair welcomed the new ex-officio (Ascension) foundation governor (KS) to the meeting. The Executive Headteacher thanked KS for the assembly she had delivered earlier that day. <i>[AG, JG and LS joined the meeting.]</i>
RESOLVED:	That the apologies of the above-named governors were accepted.

AGENDA ITEM 2	GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP
Discussion	Thanks were noted to JH for liaising with the Archdeacon and helping to fill the vacancy.
RESOLVED:	That Kathreen Shahbaz was appointed as Foundation Ex-Officio (Ascension) Governor.

AGENDA ITEM 3	DECLARATION OF BUSINESS & PECUNIARY INTEREST/S
RESOLVED:	There were none.

AGENDA ITEM 4a	MINUTES OF THE FGB MEETING 13th SEPTEMBER 2023
RESOLVED:	That the Part I minutes of the meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record.

AGENDA ITEM 4b	PREVIOUS ACTIONS/MATTERS ARISING
Discussion	<u>Previous Actions</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous Actions • Item 4 DC, HJ, LS; MC (confs only); JK (decls only) to complete declarations and confirmations on GovernorHub – Pending for DC, HJ, LS (and MC - confs only) • Item 4 GS to circulate list of safeguarding questions for governors to ask staff when they visit the schools – Complete (<i>this would be incorporated under the</i>

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	<p><i>safeguarding agenda item at future meetings).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item 4 GS/Clerk to publish Federation policies on GovernorHub – Complete • Item 4 GS/Clerk to publish staff handbooks on GovernorHub – Complete • Item 4 Clerk to add Safeguarding agenda item for next FGB meeting: a) Whistleblowing Policy b) Equality Policy, including protected characteristics – Complete (<i>agenda items 6 and 10 refer. The Whistleblowing Policy was approved by the T&L Committee on 1st November 2023).</i> • Item 10b (c/f) GS/Clerk to discuss potential schools for Collaboration Agreement proposal – Pending • Item 10b (c/f) JK to research format for governance development plan – Pending • Item 10b (c/f) GS to clarify plan of action in case of data security problem with SCR – Pending • Item 10b (c/f) JG to undertake computer science visit and GDPR visit to both schools – Pending. <p><u>Matters Arising</u> There were none.</p>
Actions (c/f):	<p>DC, HJ, LS (& MC confs only) to complete declarations/confirmations on GovernorHub</p> <p>GS/Clerk to discuss potential schools for Collaboration Agreement proposal</p> <p>JK to research format for governance development plan</p> <p>GS to clarify plan of action in case of data security problem with the SCR</p> <p>JG to undertake computer science visit and GDPR visit to both schools</p>

AGENDA ITEM 5	EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT
	<p>The Executive Headteacher referred to the updates circulated prior to the meeting (papers 5.1 and 5.2). He highlighted that pupil numbers (202) were a concern at St. James (the census was six lower than the previous year and this would potentially be a significant budget issue for next year). The Executive Headteacher and Federation Business Manager would consider mitigation in the new year.</p> <p>Q. What is the reason for the reduction?</p> <p>A. There are 21 pupils in Reception. It is possibly a 'blip' year as numbers in Nursery are looking positive (25 out of 26 places) which would hopefully lead to a full Reception next year. Anecdotally, across Manchester, numbers are similarly low; but not in all schools.</p> <p>A governor observed that the total roll for St. Philip's did not tally in paper 5.2. The Executive Headteacher would update the document.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher highlighted the excellent attendance at St. Philip's and that the school had been approached by the National College who wanted to create a video about attendance for publication on their website. Governors were pleased to hear this.</p> <p>Staff attendance was quite strong across both schools. Three members of staff at St. Philip's (one teacher and two TAs absent long-term) explain the majority of the school's absence.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher referred governors to papers 5.4 and 5.5 (Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 attainment tracking for St. James and St. Philip's respectively) which summarised the Autumn Term assessments completed across both schools. He noted that teacher assessment in Reading and Maths was higher at St. Philip's than at St. James but the Renaissance (standardised, computer-adapted test) scores were higher at St. James than at St. Philip's for these subjects. More testing would be done at St. Philip's to see if the results level-out and time would be spent working with staff in the new year to explore if there is any difference in how students are supported. Renaissance testing shows that there is no significant difference in what pupils are achieving in Reading and Maths in both schools (Maths is slightly stronger at St. Philip's; while this was not a cause for concern, it would be monitored).</p>

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	<p>Questions were invited from governors.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher referred to the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) Pen Portraits circulated prior to the meeting (papers 5.6 and 5.7). He explained that the full commentary was available to governors upon request. He reminded that, following the Ofsted inspections, there is a strong picture of where each school is; both are on the right path and progress is good.</p> <p>Q. What is the reason for the St. Philip’s overall score? A. In all areas except Quality of Education, the school was judged to be a solid ‘good’ (2) but teaching and learning had made the overall score lower. A governor commented that they were pleased that the school achieved 2’s in some areas. The Executive Headteacher stated that he did not expect it to be long before the school improves further and reminded that some changes needed time to embed.</p> <p>Governors noted the School Development Plan (SDP) priorities (circulated as papers 5.8 and 5.9) for each school.</p> <p>The Executive Headteacher summarised that there were many reasons to be very positive about both schools, and the Federation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Federation appointments were positive. Governors noted the excellent start of the Federation Business Manager and that the Federation SENDCO would start in the new year. • monitoring across both schools is now done in the same way, using the same Management Information System • the new Early Career Teacher (ECT) at St. James had started well and the second year ECTs were also doing well • the change in middle leadership at St. James had been positive • staffing changes at St. Philip’s had also been positive. The new Head of School had visited last week and was excited to start. <p>The Executive Headteacher concluded by saying that there was still work to be done and reflected on the significant staffing changes at St. James over the last couple of years and the fact that there was still plenty to do with the curriculum at St. Philip’s. He emphasised to governors that he wanted both schools’ successful Ofsted inspections to be used as motivational markers along a journey rather than as end points.</p> <p><u>CoS School Calendar 2024-25</u> The Executive Headteacher proposed that governors adopt the calendar (circulated as paper 5.3). He highlighted the change of allocating 21st and 22nd July as inset days.</p>
Action:	GS to update paper 5.2 (pupil roll).
RESOLVED:	That the School Calendar for 2024-25 was agreed for the Federation.

AGENDA ITEM 6	SAFEGUARDING
Discussion	<p>The Chair explained that the Ofsted inspections had highlighted that inspectors were keen to know that all governors understand safeguarding and she reminded that safeguarding was everyone’s role. A governor had also provided challenge at a previous governing body meeting around the number of safeguarding areas of which governors should be aware.</p> <p>In order to increase governors’ awareness of safeguarding, it was proposed that a standing agenda item would include an area from Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2023 in the form of a question for the Executive Headteacher to discuss with the schools and present evidence to governors in meetings. Governors agreed the process.</p>

The question for this meeting was: ***Does the Federation have clear processes in place for identifying pupils with possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems?*** (ref: KCSiE 2023 section 181).

The Executive Headteacher had consulted with the Head of School at St. James and the Mental Health Lead at St. Philip's (CW) and was pleased to note that the approach of each school was broadly similar:

- At St. Philip's, staff will raise concerns with the SENDCO or wellbeing team and initial interventions are considered such as:
 - zones of regulation
 - circle time
 - 1:1 checks with a familiar adult
 - a named buddy system at playtime
 - a Nurture Group (lunchtime intervention with small group activities and adult supervision)
- Following internal intervention, there will be contact with parents and consideration of referral to Early Help or M-Thrive (the point of entry to Manchester's emotional wellbeing and mental health offer) or Beacon (a counselling service used by both schools). It was noted that the schools do not receive any feedback from the counselling session unless there is something of concern that needs to be followed up.
- If there are still concerns, there will be further discussions with the family around referral to the GP and/or a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).
- Parents can be signposted to mental health charities, where appropriate.
- If there is risk of harm, there will be an immediate referral to CAMHS.
- Accountability and tracking at both schools is through CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System).

Q. Post-pandemic, has there been as much external support available?

A. The Head of School at St. James stated that there was as much, possibly slightly more. M-thrive had started after the pandemic; Early Help has improved and can offer short/focussed work with families; and there is more support available for young carers. The Head of School at St. Philip's added that for non-urgent cases, there was a waiting list of at least 18 months for CAMHS. **A governor added that the service was overloaded with SEN referrals on top of the mental health referrals.** The Head of School at St. Philip's assured that any threats to life were dealt with immediately.

Q. How does the school manage parents? Are they accepting of referrals?

A. The Head of School at St. Philip's stated that many are on-board because they are also having issues at home and are quite positive when the school wants to refer but others do not like to talk about it. The Head of School at St. James reported the same stating the majority of parents are on-board but it can take some time for others to accept it.

Q. Is the equivalent of mental health first aid training offered in the schools?

A. CW confirmed that she had completed the training and was the Mental Health Lead for St. Philip's. The equivalent postholder at St. James was currently on maternity leave. The role was being covered by the Head of School and the SENDCO.

HJ noted that she proposed to complete a mental health first aid course through the Diocese. The Chair was pleased to hear this and reminded governors to inform the Clerk of any relevant training they complete or to log this themselves on GovernorHub. **A governor reported that they had recently completed training on the Online Safety Act and had updated their training log.**

RESOLVED: That the safeguarding information was noted.

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AGENDA ITEM 7	COMMITTEE REPORTS / ACTIONS FOR FGB
Discussion	<p>The Autumn 1 Assessment data (c/f from T&L Committee meeting) was shared under agenda item 5.</p> <p>a) T&L Committee 1st November 2023 Governors noted the minutes from the 1st November meeting.</p> <p>b) Pay Committee 25th September 2023 The Pay Committee met and agreed the 6.5% national uplift for teachers and approved all of the Headteacher's recommendations for teachers' pay awards. One application to pass threshold (from the Main Pay Scale to Upper Pay Scale) was approved. The Executive Headteacher's Performance Management review was carried out with the External Advisor. The panel's recommendation in relation to the Executive Headteacher's pay was agreed.</p> <p>c) F&P Committee 4th October 2023 and 5th December 2023 Governors noted the minutes from the 4th October meeting. The 5th December meeting had included an extensive discussion about Arcadis (the schools' building consultant). The Chair praised the well-presented information brought to the meeting by the Federation Business Manager. The minutes would be shared with governors when available.</p>
RESOLVED:	That the Committee updates were noted.

AGENDA ITEM 8	GOVERNOR VISITS
Discussion	<p>The Health & Safety Lead Governor (HJ) had visited the schools on 6th December and 12th December. She shared that it was interesting to compare the different settings of each school. HJ added that the standard of caretaking at both sites was excellent. The Chair added that both caretakers were taking the same training course and were keen to develop themselves.</p> <p>The Chair updated governors that she continues to have conversations with the Councillors about the 'Toast Rack' opposite St. James and has asked that the school is kept updated following the announcement that the site had been sold. She had also asked that the school benefits from a contribution from the developers under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act to pay for a new playground.</p>
RESOLVED:	That the governor visit feedback was noted.

AGENDA ITEM 9	CHAIR'S ACTION <i>(if any)</i>
RESOLVED:	There was none.

AGENDA ITEM 10	PROCEDURES / POLICIES FOR REVIEW/APPROVAL
Discussion	<p>The Executive Headteacher explained that he, the Federation Business Manager and the Clerk had agreed a system of managing policies and those requiring review would be brought to relevant meetings gradually so as not to overwhelm governors. The approved policies would be published on the schools' websites and linked to GovernorHub.</p> <p>Governors considered the following policies/statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) CoS Federation Equality Policy and Guidance b) CoS Federation Pay Policy c) CoS Federation Safeguarding Policy d) CoS Federation Safeguarding Policy - Appendices e) St James - Children Biometric Information Statement f) St Philip's - Children Biometric Information Statement.
RESOLVED:	That the policies/statements were approved.

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AGENDA ITEM 11	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
Discussion	<p>a) Christmas Events Governors noted the dates of the following events, to which they were invited: 14th December 2023 - KS1 Nativity at St. Philip's 15th December 2023 at 2pm - Y6 Christmas service at St. Philip's 15th December 2023 at 9am - Christmas Carol singing at St. James.</p> <p>b) Headteacher of St. Philip's The Chair bid a fond farewell to the Head of School of St. Philip's (SJ) ahead of her retirement. JH presented a gift and shared that SJ was as welcoming, friendly, calm, and had the same evident love of children, as when they had first met 17 years ago. She congratulated SJ on her achievements and wished her a happy retirement, noting the challenges she had overcome. LS shared her opinion, as a parent, and thanked SJ sincerely on behalf of her and her son for being "a rock". She stated that they would both miss her immensely. CW stated that SJ cares about everybody and that everyone will miss her. SJ thanked CW for her support. She recounted the difficult first six months of her Headship and she stated that she will miss the children hugely, but felt that now was the right time to leave. She added that federating had been the right decision for the school and she was happy with the way things were progressing.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 12	DATES & LOCATIONS OF NEXT MEETINGS
	<p>FGB 30th January 2024 at 1730 at St. James. T&L Committee 17th January 2024 at 1600 at St. Philip's. F&P Committee 24th January 2024 at 1600 at St. Philip's.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 13	CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS
RESOLVED:	There were none.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.31pm.

ACTIONS FROM THE FGB MEETING HELD 13th DECEMBER 2023

Min. No	Action	By Whom	By When
4b c/f	to complete declarations/confirmations on GovernorHub	DC, HJ, LS; & MC (confs only)	w/e 15.12.23
4b c/f	to discuss potential schools for Collaboration Agreement proposal	GS/Clerk	Spring Term
4b c/f	to research format for governance development plan	JK	Spring Term
4b c/f	to clarify plan of action in case of data security problem with SCR	GS	30.01.24
4b c/f	to undertake computer science visit and GDPR visit to both schools	JG	Spring Term
5	to update paper 5.2 (pupil roll)	GS	30.01.24