

Croscombe and Stoke St Michael Primary Schools Federation
Board of Governors Meeting Minutes
Monday 12 December 2022 , 6pm, at Croscombe
This was an on-line meeting due to bad weather

Present:	
Nick Cramp (Chair) (NC)	Local Authority Governor
John Johnston (JJ)	Foundation Governor
Di Levien (DL)	Co-opted Governor
Charlotte Corbett (CC)	Foundation Governor
Christine Butler (CB)	Ex-officio Foundation Governor
Mel Vincent (MV)	Co-Headteacher
Bill Moore (BM)	Co-Headteacher
Lucy Stott (LS)	Staff Governor
Sallyanne Shallcross (SS)	Co-Opted Governor
Wendy Bower (WB)	Foundation Governor
Anna Hay (AH)	Parent Governor
Louise Jenkins (LJ)	Co-opted Governor

In attendance: Robert Simpson (Prospective Co-opted Governor) and Kathryn Strik (KS) Clerk to the Governors

	TOPIC	ITEM	ACTION/ Decision
1	Administration	<p>1 (i) Apologies: received and accepted from Tanya Tyreman (TT) Foundation Governor and Lucy Stott (LS) Staff Governor</p> <p>1. (ii) Notice of AOB items: None.</p> <p>1. (iii) Declarations of Interests: None</p> <p>1. (iv) Membership Updates: Robert (Bob) Simpson's appointment as a co-opted governor was confirmed. There is a one vacancy for a Parent Governor and on the Board of Governors. The application form for JJ to be re-appointed as foundation governor is still with the diocese.</p> <p>1. (v) Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising: WB proposed, MV seconded. Minutes approved with no amendments.</p> <p>1 (vi) Update on Actions from last meeting:</p> <p>See the updated actions list attached as an appendix to the end of these minutes.</p>	Decision
2	Co-Headteachers and Educational Performance	<p>2(i) Co-Head Teachers Report</p> <p>The co-head teachers report was circulated in advance of this meeting and are attached. These minutes record additional comments and questions only.</p> <p>Attendance – The attendance for Croscombe has gone down whilst Stoke has improved. Individual phone calls and face to face conversations have raised the profile of the need to improve attendance.</p>	

Signed

Date

	TOPIC	ITEM	ACTION/ Decision
		<p>It has been a term for lots of sickness. Unauthorised absences have reduced but authorised absences have increased. The SENCo, The ELSA and others are giving support to children and families to stay healthy.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u> – No questions. A report has gone to DL about the Ukrainian pupils.</p> <p><u>Covid & Strep A</u> - There is some parental concern about the latest government guidance about Strep A. Some staff have had Covid but the impact is not huge yet.</p> <p><u>Ukrainian children</u> – Svitlana Kulyk, the Ukrainian support teaching assistant, is now working one and a half days at Croscombe and two and a half days at Stoke St. Michael. Svitlana does translations for families and is helping a family that may become homeless.</p> <p>The governors need to be clear on what Ukrainian funds are still available to spend until April 2023. Some of this money may be clawed back as three children have left.</p> <p>Action MV and WM to check with EM on the possibility of Ukrainian funding being clawed back.</p> <p>Wessex Learning Trust were very impressed as the structured manner that the federation took on the Ukrainian children and the level of education provided over the last 6 months.</p> <p>In the medium term Svitlana will work four days per week and work in the After School Club (ASC) at Croscombe. Wessex Learning Trust suggested that some of the ASC activities could be based more on the curriculum and not play only. Governors agreed that there have to be some play activities too.</p> <p><u>School Improvement</u> – Somerset county funded Wessex Learning Trust spent a day at Stoke St. Michael staff and Sophie from Croscombe. The trust head teacher gave some tips and did a geography deep dive which went very well.</p> <p><u>Early Years</u> The trust took some ideas from the federation and they helped with assessments.</p> <p><u>MFL French</u>- the new action plan includes French Phonics.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u> – This was solid with no problems.</p> <p><u>Maths</u> – Still to receive feedback</p> <p><u>Early Reading</u> – the evidence is that the “gaps” have been plugged. The children are now keeping up rather than catching up. The evidence is from the rigorous assessment procedures.</p> <p>When monitoring governors should ask the subject leaders “Why are the children learning this?” and “ What prior knowledge is this building on? “ and “Where is this leading to?”.</p> <p>The visit by Wessex learning Trust was very positive experience for the co-heads with some challenging questions that pulled out the best in the staff and was good practice for Ofsted.</p> <p><u>Recruiting Pupils</u> - From parent meetings and staff feedback the lack of Wraparound care at Croscombe, lost during the pandemic, was partly to blame</p>	<p>Action: MV, WM</p>

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		<p>for several children leaving. When recruiting TAs for Crocombe they are asked about contributing to the Wraparound care.</p> <p>A number of staff are needed to run Before and After School Clubs as staff cannot be on site alone and a teacher must be present to take decisions should a situation arise.</p> <p>Action: MV, WM to update governors on plans for wraparound care at the FGB in January.</p> <p>Nativity - This went very well and was good PR for the federation.</p> <p>Website – This has been restored and is now hosted by Apollo. Better backup facilities have been put in place to prevent a re-occurrence of the problem.</p> <p>Changes in Roles of co-heads – This is work in progress and will be discussed at a meeting with NC. MV and WM in January.</p> <p>2(ii) Pupil Progress Data</p> <p>The Teachers are uploading the data from the assessments now.</p> <p>Action: KS to put consideration of pupil data on FGB agenda for January</p> <p>2 (iii) SDP - This will be updated with suggestions and feedback from the Wessex Learning Trust. Draft 10 to be circulated in January</p> <p>Action: MV to circulate new version of SDP in January.</p> <p>2(iv) Monitoring</p> <p>(i) Wessex Learning Trust</p> <p>Wessex Learning Trust visited . See item 2(i) School Improvement above.</p> <p>The diocese is not currently involved in monitoring or providing support.</p> <p>(ii) Governors</p> <p>Monitoring visits of subjects will be conducted during the second half of each of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. The focus of the visits is taken from the School Development Plan (SDP).</p> <p>Action: MV and WM to update governors on subjects ready to do a deep dive.</p> <p>2 (v) Training & Development – There will be an INSET day for subject leaders to do a deep dive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • ReadWriteInc • Maths <p>(vi) SEN (special Educational Needs) Review</p> <p>Tracy Massey-Sturgess, the SENCo the gave a verbal report on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current SEN statements • The Red, Amber or Green rating for the statement and the reasons why 	<p>Action: MV, WM</p> <p>Action: KS</p> <p>Action: MV</p> <p>Action: MV, WM</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plans for the future <p>The main points of the review are recorded with questions in these minutes.</p> <p>1. Level of engagement with the Local Authority – GREEN</p> <p>The waiting lists for consideration of a child’s Special needs is very long. Both schools are fully engaged with SEN meetings and taking up the support on offer. The Strategic SEN Inclusion Discussions (SSID) with the local Authority adviser and the schools and the SENCo are held regularly and reports and plans are sent to the SEN governor.</p> <p>Educational Psychology (EP) service. This core offer used to be free, but now has to be paid for. The EP has little contact with the children unless there are very specific problems to be addressed. The governors are asked to consider the Early Bird service in April for the EP service for children with EHCPs.</p> <p>2 Policies - GREEN</p> <p>These were reviewed by Governors in March 2022, the SEN Report is on the website and the SEN register is reviewed regularly.</p> <p>3 Staff skilling - AMBER.</p> <p>The SENCo has disseminated information from training courses but there are opportunities for peer to peer learning and mentoring. The SENCO and co-heads wish to have dedicated hours for TAs to do interventions and that has to be budgeted for.</p> <p>4 Assessments – GREEN</p> <p>Teachers have checklists for assessments. i.e. Assess-Plan- Review. All children with SEN have a plan in place. These cover</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs / difficulties does the child have? • What has been put in place? • What the staff need to know. • What the child needs to know. <p>The SENCO monitors the plan and the outcomes with learning walks and observing the child in the classroom. Coloured charts show whether the children’s SEN needs are being met or not or exceeded. The SENCo has a deeper knowledge to take the child to the next level e.g. after a diagnosis or things to improve on.</p> <p>5 Parents engaged and sharing the work with the school – AMBER.</p> <p>Almost all of the parents engage with the review meetings and through Parent Voice. To go to GREEN the SENCO would like to have coffee mornings / information events to network and share knowledge.</p> <p>Some parents were concerned that the number of TAs was reduced. Parents appreciated the school communications and that the SEN governor was aware of the issues.</p> <p>The SEN governor (DL) was asked for her impressions. She is confident that the SEM provision has improved and finds the regular meetings with the SENCo</p>	

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		<p>useful. The SENCo now works 3 days per week for the federation and this has made a big difference. DL is confident that the two AMBERS can become GREEN.</p> <p>Questions</p> <p>There are three meetings a year with the parents of a SEN child, is this more / less as required? The depends on the child's needs, children with more needs will see the SENCo more, whereas those with fewer needs will have meetings with the class teacher instead.</p> <p>The schools are keyed into the LA strategic plan to do more SSID meetings to improve things.</p> <p>How do you communicate what to expect to anxious parents? Parents are involved in the process and agree at the meetings what will happen next and when the next meeting will be and with whom. Letters are sent out nearer the time as reminders. For some parents the regular contact is the SENCo and for others, it is the class teacher. Parents of children with higher needs will be in more structured meetings and with more communication.</p> <p>It was agreed that the SENCO should put together a wish list for consideration at budget time.</p> <p>Action: MV, WM to present SENCo wish list at budget meetings</p> <p>The governors thanked Tracy for a very comprehensive report and agreed that they are confident of the way forward. For SEN provision.</p> <p>2(vi) Policies /documents</p> <p>The following policies /documents were approved for use.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maths calculation Policies for Power maths (White Rose) for Reception, KS1, LKS2 and UKS2 2. School Uniform Policy – to include latest guidance on availability and affordability of uniforms . The website pages for Croscombe and Stoke St. Michael together form the Federation Policy on School Uniform. <p>Action: All governors to let DL know if they have read the Behaviour Policy.</p> <p>The following documents are carried forward to the next FGB meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay Policy – to add pay awards when agreed. 2. PE report 2021-22 3. Pupil Premium report 2021-22 <p>Action: JJ to send Pay Policy to KS to circulate</p> <p>Action: KS, MV and WM to put together a list of policies for approval at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Action: KS to update the policy review schedule</p>	<p>Action: MV,WM</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>Action: ALL</p> <p>Action: JJ</p> <p>Action: KS, MV, WM</p> <p>Action: KS</p>

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3	Sub-Committee updates	<p>3.(i) Finance Committee Update:</p> <p>TT circulated an update for the Finance committee in advance of the meeting. The Month 6 Finance Report showed that the federation are in a much better position. Letters have been sent to parents to collect arrears for school trips etc.</p> <p>The next Finance committee meeting is 12 January 2023.</p> <p>3. (ii) Ethos/Foundation Committee:</p> <p>The Ethos committee has not met since the last FGB meeting.</p> <p>3 (iii) Premises Committee</p> <p>BS has prepared a report on Premises and a Health & Safety Periodic Report. These will be uploaded to the Teams.</p> <p>Premises – repairs to the flood dam, county produced a pre-work survey and electric light fittings need to be replaced to take LED bulbs.</p> <p>Wildlife garden – this needs to be re-costed as the price of materials has increased</p> <p>Croscombe maintenance Survey Report- 13 defects were reported. This is approx. £24K worth of work.</p> <p>BS is to meet with the diocese to see if they can help with work schedule and costs. This should be before the next meeting.</p> <p>A grant is available for decarbonisation that may help Stoke St. Michael as the building is losing heat through the roof and the replacement of the boiler needs to be looked at. Funds may be available for this.</p> <p>Health & Safety Audit – red items are those that need to be addressed. The documentation and policy need to be reviewed but there are no safety concerns in the schools. Policy templates can be adapted.</p> <p>BS needs access to the EEC toolkit.</p> <p>Action: KS to circulate Health & Safety audit</p> <p>3(iv) Fund-raising workgroup</p> <p>WB was elected chair and the first meeting planned for 9 January. WB asked a fund-raising governor at another school about the best way to apply for grants. She now has lots of material to read. There is a need to involve the teachers to put together a wish list so that certain grant bodies can be targeted.</p> <p>Friends of Croscombe School (FOCS) will also have some input as some support from parents is needed. FOCS currently has no treasurer and no bank details are known.</p>	<p>Action: KS</p>

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		<p>Action: AH to ask Catherine Little if she would be interested in FOCS</p> <p>Action: WM to ask EM about the FOCS bank account details</p> <p>3(v) Marketing & Promotion workgroup</p> <p>AH, LS and TT met. The content of the Facebook account was discussed and there is a need to involve the teachers in this. The leaflets disseminated resulted in 3 or 4 children joining and the recruitment of a premises governor. The website needs to be populated with the same sort of news as Facebook. MV and WM were asked to provide Christmas and New Year news to put on Facebook. Teachers have a week allotted to them to give their input.</p> <p>3(vi) PTA Link workgroup</p> <p>They will seek feedback from parents and publish actions in the newsletter and on social media.</p>	<p>Action: AH</p> <p>Action: WM</p>
4	Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction	<p>4 (i) Visions/Objectives</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p> <p>4 (ii) LA Initiatives</p> <p>The LA proposal for the Patchwork Partnership now called the Maintained Schools Core Offer will be presented in November. It is still uncertain whether the Local Authority will be able to set up their own Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).</p> <p>4 (iii) Diocese Update</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p> <p>4 (iv) Academisation</p> <p>Conversations about finances, a sustainable plan for the 2 schools are needed. The visit by Wessex Learning Trust (WLT) highlighted the isolation of the schools and that this is holding back the development of the schools and the financial challenges are always in the background. There is the uncertainty of having sufficient children and finances to sustain the schools. The option of becoming part of a Multi-academy Trust (MAT) has to be considered and weighed against staying as a federation.</p> <p>The decision is for the governors to make but there is a need to take into account the view of all stakeholders e.g. staff, parents and look at the pros and cons.</p> <p>The governors were asked for their views on joining a MAT.</p> <p>The new Ofsted Framework is geared towards school being in a MAT and the new curriculum is very demanding for small schools working in isolation.</p> <p>It is about what is best for the children, their learning and experiences. It was agreed that the education that the federation offers is good but the support</p>	

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		<p>offered by the Wessex Learning Trust (WLT) was unlike that received before and resulted in a boost in energy and confidence.</p> <p>In a MAT there are staff with expertise in Finance, Premises, Health & Safety and Human Resources that are available to all the schools in the MAT.</p> <p>Policies are shared across schools in the MAT and written by specialists.</p> <p>If the governors decide to join a MAT how quickly would it happen? What would the likely timeline be? Usually within 12 months. At this early stage the governors are being asked to explore the options and gain more information about the MATs.</p> <p>The benefits of a MAT include the sharing of work and allow teaching staff to share learning and concentrate on providing education. The MAT could help with sustained growth of smaller schools over time by pooling the finances.</p> <p>The diocese runs courses on academisation and choosing a MAT.</p> <p>Action: LJ to look into courses on academisation available from the Diocese.</p> <p>Concern was expressed that smaller schools could lose their identity in a trust. This would be looked at when talking to MAT representatives and when choosing a MAT to join.</p> <p>The schools are currently in a good position to look at the options available. Governors want to look into the subject of academisation in more detail before making a decision.</p> <p>There is definitely some merit in looking into the impact of joining a MAT as it could benefit the teaching staff and improve the expertise in other areas e.g. premises, HR etc.</p> <p>There is concern that joining a MAT will have an adverse effect on teaching staff and that the schools become subsumed into the MAT, so losing their uniqueness. Governors would need to ask the MATs how the schools would retain their individuality and how they might flourish.</p> <p>Teachers learn much from their colleagues and fellow teachers in other schools / settings and this could be a major benefit for teaching staff.</p> <p>The federation has made good progress with two small independent country schools but it has been hard. The creativeness of the schools is lovely. Would like to look closely at what is available and make an informed decision and that this is the right time to start.</p> <p>Two volunteers and NC to meet to produce a shortlist of MATs that can be approached.</p> <p>Action: KS to send NC list of local MATS and links</p>	<p>Action: LJ</p> <p>Action: KS</p>

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5	Matters Arising/AOB	<p>5 (i) Updates and Questions</p> <p>The clerk's briefing notes were circulated in advance. There were no questions or comments. The clerk highlighted the future funding for school buildings that is likely to be distributed over the next couple of years.</p> <p>Governors should take notice of anything pertinent to their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>5 (ii) Governor Training</p> <p>Training completed: JJ attended a diocesan course on "Choosing your MAT" on 18 October.</p> <p>Training Planned:</p> <p>AH to do course on Monitoring for governors BS attended Safeguarding for Governors BS and LJ to attend Induction for New Governors LJ to attend Safeguarding for governors in May.</p> <p>Much of the training offered by the diocese is free. Governors are encouraged to take advantage of any courses that are advantageous.</p> <p>The training brochures for the LA and diocese are in the FGB-Governors Team in the Governor Training folder.</p> <p>A.O.B. None</p> <p>The chair thanked all the staff and governors for their hard work during the last year and bid them a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.</p>	
	Next meetings	<p>Meeting dates for next term</p> <p>Finance Thursday 12 January 2023 – 1:00pm</p> <p>FGB Monday 30th January 2023 at 6pm at Stoke St. Michael</p> <p>FGB 27March 2023 at Croscombe</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>The meeting closed at 8:04pm</i></p>	

Appendix 1 - Updated actions

No.	Date	Actions from FGB meetings	Status
1.	31.01.22	<p>Pupil Premium and Sports premium to be added to website and circulated to Governors at next meeting. MV to check Sports Premium</p> <p>PE report 2021-22 – Claire to do</p> <p>Pupil Premium report – for FGB January 2022</p>	MV/WM Ongoing
2.	28.03.22	<p>All governors to report to Elaine or Tamsyn that they have read the 2022 version of KCSIE. (if they have not already done so)</p> <p>KS to send document to two new governors and arrange safeguarding training</p>	ALL governors Ongoing KS

No.	Date	Actions from FGB meetings	Status
3.	17.05.22	NC, MV, BM to put together a plan to advertise for a premises governor.	Complete
4.	20.9.22	Committees and workgroups to decide on chairs and inform clerk Fund-raising chair WB Marketing & Promotions TT & LS	Complete
5.	17.10.22	KS to update the governors' responsibilities & roles etc with new governors & chairs	KS
6.	17.10.22	Co-heads to provide an update on the plan to use the Ukrainian funding to the FGB meeting in December	MV, WM
7.	17.10.22	ALL governors to provide MV and WM with feedback on the SDP prior to the next FGB meeting Wessex Learning Trust provided some feedback and re-wording SDP to be re-circulated	ALL MV, WM Ongoing
8.	17.10.22	MV and WM to share information on the impact of RWInc with governors Wessex Learning Trust were impressed with the use at Stoke	MV, WM Ongoing
9.	17.10.22	LS to talk to MV about using social media to advertise wraparound care. LS is updating regularly, weekly and this is working well.	Complete
10	17.10.22	LS to arrange a date & time for the first Marketing & Promotion workgroup meeting	LS Ongoing
11	17.10.22	MV to ask IT if it is possible to convert over the old Ethos committee Team	MV Complete
12	17.10.22	CC to circulate a list of what items the 40 for the federation money has been spent on and what is planned to be spent on in future.	CC Complete
13	17.10.22	An updated list of subject leaders and subject governors to be circulated	KS Complete
14	17.10.22	ALL governors to send completed monitoring visit reports to TT to collate	ALL Ongoing
15	17.10.22	The Strategic Direction folder to include the information useful for OFSTED	KS Complete
16	17.10.22	KS, MV and WM to put together a list of policies for approval at the next FGB meeting KS to arrange meeting to agree review documents for Spring term	KS, MV, WM Complete