

**Croscombe and Stoke St Michael Primary Schools Federation
Board of Governors Meeting Minutes
Monday 15 May 2023, 6pm at Croscombe**

Present:	
Nick Cramp (Chair) (NC)	Local Authority Governor
Christine Butler (CB)	Ex-officio Foundation Governor
Sallyanne Shallcross (SS)	Co-Opted Governor
Wendy Bower (WB)	Foundation Governor
Anna Hay (AH)	Parent Governor
Louise Jenkins (LJ)	Co-opted Governor
Tanya Tyreman (TT)	Foundation Governor
Chris Partridge (CP)	Head teacher

Apologies: John Johnston (JJ) Foundation Governor, Charlotte Corbett (CC) Foundation Governor, Lucy Stott (LS) Staff Governor, Mel Vincent Co-head and Robert Simpson (RS) Co-opted Governor

In attendance: Kathryn Strik (KS) Clerk to the Governors

Topics for discussion

1. Update from Local Authority

NC spoke to the LA about the possibility of CP working with the Federation schools after September to allow him to carry through the changes that will be made in the short-term. This topic will be discussed at the end of this meeting.

2. Structure of the leadership team across the federation

The proposal is that CP is the executive head for both schools.

MV will remain at Stoke St. Michael for the summer term but has resigned and will leave in September as she needs a break to focus on her family's needs.

The federation budget cannot support an Executive Head teacher and two co-heads one for each school. The proposal is for an Executive head teacher and two senior teachers to form a Senior Leadership Team. (SLT). The details of this will be discussed later.

A governor asked **if MV was okay**. MV is fine but feels she needs to focus on her family's needs for a while. MV's resignation means that the role of co-head does not need to be filled. HR see this as a logical move to appoint senior teachers.

A governor asked **if the two senior teachers will have more non-contact time to spend on their SLT duties**. No more than one day non-contact time is affordable. They will teach 4 days per week and cover will be needed for day 5. PE and Music time will contribute to non-contact time for the SLT to do Observations, work on environment, resources and to attend governors' meetings. They will also need some PPA time.

Any proposal for the SLT must be.

- Viable
- Approved by Somerset HR

- Approved by governors.

The plan is to tell the federation teachers very soon.

3. What needs to be done at Croscombe?

CP was invited to update the governors on Croscombe and what needs to be done.

- CP would like to see the governors stepping back from helping with the day-to-day management of the schools and the governing body acting as a sounding board being both supportive and challenging.
- To win back the confidence of the parents at Croscombe. The recent coffee morning with CP and JJ and the parent survey questionnaire highlighted the parents' main concerns. The notes and results of the survey were circulated to governors. The results of these will be followed up. The atmosphere at Croscombe has changed and is more positive.
- To put together a solid structure for positive teaching team at Croscombe. CP proposes to advertise for teachers to form a new team for September.
- A governor was concerned that **there is a lot to do for an impending Ofsted inspection and could they be put off?** It is not known if Ofsted can be put off, but the work needs to be done now.
- The premises at Croscombe have not had work done in years because the Local Authority and the diocese could not agree on who would pay for the major works. As a result the building is suffering from leaks, rot, mould and is in need of re-decoration. Much of the building work is now in hand with Bob Simpson overseeing the work. The windows are being upgraded by Hookways. They will be fitted with safety locks that will allow ventilation but still keep the children safe.
- Governors pointed out that **many people from the LA had visited Croscombe over recent years and reported that things needed to be done but did not help with any advice, support or funding.** Governors agreed that it is good that the LA are helping now but that they did not help before when help was asked for.
- Parents have taken their children out of the school in recent years mainly because of the instability due the turnover of teaching staff.
- The children's behaviour is very good and some of the staff show potential whilst others have low expectations.
- Some administration e.g. updating training records is not being done.
- Safeguarding procedures have been improved and this needs to be followed up.
- Stoke St Michael is good at getting premises problems fixed but this has not been the case at Croscombe.
- The staff at both schools are very vocal. CP will be more involved in the teaching at SSM and has done a deep dive in Geography at SSM with MV. There are some areas for improvement.
- The SENCO will continue to oversee the SEN for both schools and manage the TAs, putting in place training for the TAs.
- Stability for the children and parents – the Parents need to know.
 - what is happening?
 - who the teachers will be and in which class in September.
 - that there is driving force getting things done
 - what is being done to improve the classrooms?
 - if CP would still be at the school (Croscombe) after September.

- o. The perception of the Croscombe parents is that Stoke St Michael is benefitting more from the federation money than Croscombe and that Croscombe had the second-rate teachers. They wanted to know what was going to be done about this.
- p. There is a need for more communication with parents. CP started Class Dojo for Croscombe parents so that they could see what is going on in class in real-time. By improving the communication the perception may change.
- q. Better communication across the federation will hopefully convince parents that the two schools are not in competition.
- r. It was suggested that parents and governors could work together to improve an aspect of the school e.g. painting walls or tidying the playground, field or the allotment. Craig Stevens at Windmill Hill will help with the allotments.
- s. The communication with the parents would stress that the programme of improvement is for the long-term.
- t. A plan (one side of A4) of possible improvements could be drawn up and parents could be asked what they could do to help and to forge links with the community.
- u. CP's appointment as head teacher featured in the latest copy of the Roundabout, which is circulated in Dinder, Dulcote and Croscombe.
- v. Opportunity to forge links with the community. Richard Cronin of the Croscombe Frolics has encouraged people to be involved in providing the lighting and sound systems for the school play on the 3 & 4 July. His hope is to encourage more children to join the theatre group. The play will be advertised in the Roundabout.
- w. Classrooms & environment The reception classroom is in need of re-furbishment.
- x. Teaching staff – Weekly staff meetings have been re-started and staff are starting to see things happen.

Topics discussed at staff meetings include.

- Where is Croscombe at?
- Where is Croscombe going?
- Agreeing the priorities with governors.

Governors were pleased to hear that the staff are meeting to share ideas and experiences of teaching. Parents will pick up on positive messages from staff. CP will report back to the staff on the governors' meetings.

- y. Staff at Stoke St. Michael have a better understanding of data.
- z. The SDP plan could be condensed to a one-page precis for parents.

Action: KS to send CP a copy of the Parental overview of SDP	KS
Action: CP to resend his report on what he is working on to governors	CP
Action: CP to talk to staff (at both schools) about the staffing structure for Sept	CP
Action: CP to prepare his new staffing structure for governors within two weeks	CP
Action: CP to advertise for new staff.	CP
Action: NC to inform parents when new staffing structure is decided upon	NC

Questions for CP

Do you feel that you have the support and resources that you need to do as you would like? NO, but this is not unusual. There is support from the governors and the staff, but other support is not yet there. There are not sufficient resources at present. The parents are supportive, some staff are positive and some not so positive.

CP has access to resources for moderation and can call on people to help. The diocese is helping with the building. Kate Edwards the Relationship manager is helping. There is however a need to keep up the pressure on external agencies. The LA will do two mock Ofsted inspections.

Is the work doable? Yes, both schools have great potential.

Do you think that the Federation is viable? CP's first perception is that it is not working as a federation. CP is yet to talk to all the staff of both schools. The potential is there to be Better together.

Are you committed to stay on? Yes, CP has long-term goals. There is hope here and the parents need stability.

Often when a new person comes in, they see everything that has gone before as bad. What do you see that is amazing that can be kept moving forward? Croscombe has fallen behind Stoke St. Michael and this can be turned around. CP and the governors will need to continue to shout to get the schools the help they need. Not everything will be discarded in the short term. MV speaks passionately about Stoke St. Michael and is good with the parents. The governors are federated.

The meeting concluded at 7:58pm