



THE PINNACLE SCHOOLS FEDERATION
Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting
Monday 8th July 2024, 7pm.
Hawkesbury Primary School



NAME	Abrv	STATUS	Present	NAME	Abrv	STATUS	Present
Ben Clarke	BC	Co-opted	✓	Deb Marriage	DM	Co-opted	A
Jan Conner	JC	Foundation Iron Acton	✓	Mike Riches	MR	Executive Headteacher	✓
Karen Foxwell	KF	Associate member	✓	Lizzie Reynolds	LR	Co-opted	✓
Julie Gardener	JG	Foundation – Hawkesbury	✓	Malcolm Strange	MS	Iron Acton Ex-officio	✓
Adrian Gilby	AG	Co-opted	✓	Rob Taylor	RT	Co-opted	✓
Sarah Godsell	SG	Local Authority	✓	Harmeet Turner	HT	Parent Governor	✓
Kathryn Kempster	KK	Co-opted	✓	Christine Wilson	CW	Staff Elected	✓
Oliver Latter	OL	Parent governor	A	Vacancy		Hawkesbury Ex-officio	
				Kate Bashford		Minutes	✓

✓ = Attended, A = Absent with Apologies, X = absent no apology *via teams

Meeting Opened: 7pm

5	<p>Presentation from Rachel Dare (RD) CEO and Guy Philips (GP), Deputy CEO at Severn Federation Academies Trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RD has visited both IA and HA schools recently • RD extended an invitation for all Pinnacle Governors to visit one of the Academies in their Trust. • The Trust was formed in January 2021 from 3 primary schools in the Forest of Dean. They are a majority article Trust. There are now 6 primary schools in the Trust: VA, VC and Community schools are all represented. Another school will be joining soon. • Their Vision is to be nurturing, inspiring, including and loving. • Expansion plans include building a community of schools in this area. • Proven record of school improvement: within the Trust, inadequate schools have moved to good, and good schools have moved to Outstanding. • They have a strong central team to support the hubs and communities of schools. • Aspire to make school life more manageable for Headteachers – Central team takes care of estates management, elements of compliance, finance management. It is a GAG pool Trust. All pupil-lead grant (e.g. Pupil Premium) is returned to the schools. They have an in-house HR function. • They consider school improvement priorities for each school, look to prioritise those and fund where possible. • The Trust has a balanced budget for the next 3 years. Use as much grant funding as possible. • They do <u>not</u> have a tightly aligned curriculum across the Trust. Happy for their schools to be independent. However, they will review and support the curriculum that the schools have. E.g. use 3 different phonics schemes across the Trust. • There is strong collaboration and professional curiosity between the schools – this is encouraged. E.g. fortnightly leaders’ network. • Want children to have the very best opportunities. Believe they are very good at primary education. • GP emphasised their Trust is very much about the children and the belief they can achieve more by working together, providing better life opportunities for children. • Their largest school is currently 2 form entry. They are bucking the national trend in seeing that most of their schools are full. The smallest school has 40 children.
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Signed by Chair:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the uniqueness of Federations and already have executive Headship within the Trust. <p>Can you give me some examples of the opportunities that children get that they wouldn't get in a village primary school? – Some Year 6 children attended the leavers service at Gloucester Cathedral and enjoyed the fact that they knew children from other schools – they have got to know them through, for example creative activities, sporting opportunities, residential trips, challenges between schools throughout the year. Children know they are part of the Trust.</p> <p>Resourcing – I assume at the moment your core is in the Forest of Dean – how would the sharing of resources work? Yes, Central Team are based there but their outreach is much wider. We are about building a community of schools in this area who can access our central team. We are ready to scale up and grow. Our School Improvement team are very mobile</p> <p>Would you extend the hub? Will it always stay where it is? – it could be in time that we do need to grow and set up an additional hub. Its very often the support and communication that's needed, not necessarily in person. We are certainly working towards providing a group of schools in this area that will allow for more day to day sharing. We make much use of electronic meetings between schools and staff.</p> <p>Are you targeting a particular size or number of schools? – we are talking to a number of Diocese of Gloucester and Diocese of Bristol small rural schools</p> <p>How do you maintain the uniqueness alongside the cohesion that is needed within the Trust? – we ensure we have headteachers who lead those schools. All of our schools are central to those communities, and those communities are very different. We are not homogenous as a Trust – e.g. some schools will excel at music, some at forest schools. Information and skills are shared, but schools are allowed to be unique. Church schools will be driven by their Christian vision. There is a lovely collaboration but fierce independence alongside that.</p> <p>Does the Central Team include the SEND provision? – we have a Send an inclusion lead who coordinates a network of SendCos and Send support staff. SEND admin support is also provided.</p> <p>Have you seen the number of SEND children grow? – yes. Some of the figures are quite startling – we have moved from 12 to 62 EHCPs since the Trust started. The level of expertise and skills that can be provided to HT has grown with that need.</p> <p>The invitation for governors to visit schools in the Trust was repeated. RD and GP left the meeting.</p>
<p>1-2</p>	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JG welcomed everyone to the meeting. <p>Opening Prayer or Reflection</p> <p>MS led a reflection.</p> <p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies received and accepted from DM and OL (work commitments). <p>Quorum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was quorate.



3	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary and Business Interests MS declared that he has been appointed as a Member of a MAT.</p>
4	<p>Items for AOB Correspondence.</p>
6	<p>Minutes from Previous Meetings The Minutes from the FGB of 13th May 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p>
7	<p>Matters Arising The action points from the last minutes were reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual H & Safety report to be prepared for July meeting – this has been shared with Resources and will be emailed to all Governors for review. Action ALL • Letter to LA regarding school funding – ongoing Action RT • Carry out / co-ordinate website check. – ongoing Action BC • Meet and progress clerk position (JG/KK) – unfortunately an applicant withdrew from the application process. Some information regarding an alternative service provider is being explored. Action JG <p>All others actions are complete or discussed later in these minutes.</p>
8	<p>Election of co-opted governor Terms of office are coming to an end for KK, RT, DM, BC. KK is stepping down from the Governing Board. DM has indicated to JG that she would like to continue on the Board. RT and BC left the meeting. Governors voted unanimously to co-opt RT, DM and BC for a further 2 years. RT and BC returned to the meeting.</p>
9	<p>Head Teacher’s report The Headteacher’s report had been shared on teams in advance of the meeting. The following questions had been received:</p> <p>There are a high number of days lost to absence at IA. Is there a specific issue? Can you give a little more context to the rate of staff absence at the two schools across the year? Is this above / below or in line with what you would expect staff absence rates to look like? Staff sickness seems to have been high for IA. I assume that there is a reason for this which hopefully is a one off and would think is being proactively managed. Can you elaborate on this and advise as to whether there is an under lying issue? – At IA last year, 55 days were lost (from 13 staff), compared to 80.5 (15 staff) this year. 9 of the 15 staff had between 0.5-4 days sickness within the year. There were recognised reasons for other staff having the longer amounts of leave. No-one has reported anything school related which has caused their time off. At HA last year 99 days were lost (11 staff), compared to 32 this year (6 staff) – there were some family bereavements and family needs in the previous year which impacted these numbers.</p> <p>Are there a sufficient number of TEAM Teach trained staff across both schools? – this relates to positive handling of children There are 4 staff trained at IA and 2 at HA. This feels appropriate for the risk assessment.</p> <p>How will we go about recruiting a Clerk in the new academic year? – see matters arising. We are doing what we can: we are looking at recruiting jointly with another school and independently.</p>



	<p>Has the equalities incident (IA) and the bullying incident (HA) been resolved? What actions were taken? – yes, the equalities incident has been resolved. It is a different child but a similar incident happened last year. The language seems to be picked up during online computer games. The incident form was returned to the LA. The parents and child were spoken to. Governors commended staff for reporting incidents such as these and ensuring that they are properly addressed.</p> <p>The EHT noted that the report includes alleged bullying incidents, as well as actual, and that since the report was prepared there has been an additional report of a bullying incident at HA. This latest incident feels more significant: as with all such reports, it is being fully investigated and taken seriously. There will be conversations with children and parents over the coming days. Following a thorough investigation of the other incidents and reference to the Policy, it has been confirmed that these were not incidents of bullying.</p> <p>FDP update - Can you tell us a bit more about the Flashback 4 approach? Is this used across all subjects? – it’s a method for assessing the foundation subjects. It is very much part of the lesson: questions are asked at the start, and that information is used by teachers to shape the lesson there and then. It is being used by lots of schools. It is already in place here for some foundation subjects – particularly science, history and geography and will be used further.</p>
10	<p>SEND report from SENDCo</p> <p>The report prepared by CW (SENDCo) had been shared in advance of the meeting. The following questions had been received:</p> <p>Do the SEND numbers indicate a year on year increase? If so, what is the impact of this? – there has been quite an increase in SEND children. There are now 19 children at HA and 18 at IA on the SEND register. This includes a number of children who have joined the school in EYFS and have joined as in-year transfer. The numbers had been quite steady prior to and during covid but there has been quite a dramatic increase over the past year or so. Both schools are now above the national average for the % of SEND children.</p> <p>Is there a link to the fact that pupil numbers are increasing overall? – yes that could be part of the picture. But we could also be asked if the higher number of SEND children is attributable to the teaching at the school. However, because SEND is being seen in EYFS children and joiners from other schools we can say its not down to the quality of teaching in our schools. In addition, a SEND review has been carried out at IA and it was noted that the SEND provision was gold standard.</p> <p>To ensure the correct children are on the SEND register, the register is regularly reviewed and there will be ongoing conversations with parents – some of these will take place before the children are on the SEND register to highlight where there could be a SEND.</p> <p>Is it likely that the schools are attracting more SEND children because of your strong reputation in this area? – possibly, but at this stage it looks like the new EYFS cohort joining us in September will have fewer SEND pupils.</p> <p>Thank you for this report and keeping Governors updated. Do you feel you have sufficient support in leading and managing SEND provision and liaising with other members of staff, external agencies and parents, given its the emotive nature? – the SENDCo feels well supported by the EHT who is very up to speed on SEND requirements. Through the SEN review at IA, it has been recommended that capacity for SEND support is increased. As a result, funding has been secured to support additional training for staff. With increasing numbers of children on the SEND register, staff time is very tight. This is against a background of other additional requirements being made of schools – e.g. ADHD referrals used to be through GPs, but are now made through the schools.</p>



	<p>What do we mean by at school support? – this is where needs have been identified and children put on the SEN register because they need above and beyond Quality First teaching. We follow the assess-plan-do process. Most children have their needs met through “at school support”, and a few will have their needs met through EHCP support.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Academisation Update AG provided an update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MR has continued to have further dialogue with MAT CEOS. • 3 MATs have been shortlisted to look at in the autumn term (Leaf, Mosaic, Severn Federation, with CSET as a reserve). Questionnaires are being prepared – these are based on published guidance. • Consideration will need to be given to governors visiting academies and capturing feedback on a like for like basis. • MR has been in touch with the DfE Regional Officer and will request additional information now that the election is finished. <p>Is there a proforma that governors could use when they make visits? – yes, that will be prepared but its also down to the overall feel that governors have when they make a visit.</p> <p>With the 3 that you have mentioned, is there a priority list? – it depends very much on whether or not they have majority articles. Mosaic and Leaf do not currently have majority articles.</p> <p>Can I ask where we are with updating parents? – is there another newsletter going out? – there is a newsletter being shared next Friday but given there is limited information to report at this stage, Governors agreed to do an update for parents after the offsite in September.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Monitoring Update KK thanked staff and governors who have supported the monitoring process. JG noted that the overwhelming majority of planned monitoring has been completed, and there have also been discussions at Committee level.</p> <p>The presentations from staff and pupils have been very insightful for the Standards Committee, and feel a real strength. It was noted that from a staff point of view, the fact that monitoring forms are shared in advance is very welcome. The monitoring plan for the 2024-25 year will try to ensure that it is not an overwhelming workload for staff or governors, and avoids overlap. It will reflect on SIAMS and FDP priorities.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Review of 2023-24 <u>Ethos committee</u> SG thanked committee members for their input.</p> <p>Achievements - the collaborative approach taken to updating the federation vision to ensure its theological rooting. Fulfilling our monitoring requirements as set out in our Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Challenges - ensuring curriculum monitoring evidences the relevant SIAMS Inspection Questions. Completing actions in a timely way as we’re currently a very small committee.</p> <p>Aspirations for the next academic year - Preparing for and enabling a positive SIAMS for all.</p> <p><u>Resources Committee</u> This year’s achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased pupil numbers at both schools which will have a positive impact and is partly due to us continuing with a 4-class system.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School buildings still appear well kept as a result of effective targeting of limited funds and support from external working parties. • Replacement heating installation at Hawkesbury School. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased need and reduced funding in an environment with an increasing deficit. • Operating without a School Clerk (but thanks to Kate for her continued support). • Reduced support from South Gloucestershire Council. <p>Aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased school & SEND funding allocation(s) • Reduce deficit • Complete solar panel installations at both schools • Appoint School Clerk. <p><u>Standards Committee</u></p> <p>Achievements – the knowledge that is available to the Committee: Subject lead (SL) presentations feel a great input and are supported with useful discussion. The feedback session from pupils was a highlight.</p> <p>Monitoring of data- the presentation of the data is working well, and allows for strong challenge.</p> <p>Challenges – increased SEND support and the impact this has on staff and resources. Concern that some children’s needs are so significant that this impacts on the progress they are able to make at school.</p> <p>Budget pressures are impacting on interventions and support.</p> <p>Whilst behaviour remains challenging in a small number of cases, monitoring of this has demonstrated that behaviour has improved: the Committee feels confident that there are sound measures in place to support the children. Feedback from the Inclusion team supports this.</p> <p>MHWB continues to be a recurring theme that staff and pupils are having to consider.</p> <p>Aspirations – to continue with the SL presentations and more presentations from pupils.</p> <p>Governors considered if there should be similar presentations at FGB, but concluded that they have a specific focus which is best covered by the Standards Committee. Governors who are not on the standards committee are welcome to join the meetings for the presentations if they so wish.</p>
14	<p>Planning for 2024-25</p> <p>Election of chair and vice chair</p> <p>Governors concluded that in the absence of DM, elections for Vice Chair would not take place until the October meeting.</p> <p>A nomination had been received for JG to act as Chair. JG left the meeting.</p> <p>Nomination was seconded by RT. JG unanimously elected by Governors as Chair for another year.</p> <p>KK is stepping down as Co-chair and will be leaving the Governing Board. All Governors gave enormous thanks to KK for her work as a Governor, which has included over 2 years as Co-chair. Her advice, experience and insight into the school environment have been hugely appreciated, and will be very much missed.</p> <p>Link Governors and Committee memberships</p> <p>AG noted that it can sometimes be difficult to ensure full attendance. Meeting times are being reviewed. Action KB.</p> <p>Arrangements for Pay Panel and HT PM</p> <p><u>Headteachers Performance Management</u> - OL, RT, SG – 17th September 1-3pm</p>



	<p><u>Pay Panel</u> – JG, LR, BC. Tuesday 15th October. 1.30pm</p> <p><u>Governor offsite</u> – 30th September 7pm. RT to book room at The Lamb, Iron Acton. Action RT. Academisation and self-evaluation will be the discussion topics.</p>
15	<p>Policies for agreement All Policies had been made available on teams in advance of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints • Parent / Carer Acceptable use Policy • Staff Acceptable Use Policy • SEND Policy <p>Polices all agreed and ratified.</p>
16	<p>Safeguarding MR summarised 2 key elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A safeguarding Action Plan has been prepared based on findings of the safeguarding audit: SLT meeting once per term where the action plan is reviewed. • The number of Early Help and Assessment Plans now remains stable, but there are some children receiving a higher level of support: Governors should be aware that there are children with more significant needs and the school is working with external services.
17	<p>Committee headlines</p> <p>Ethos committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing policy was updated, scrutinised and ratified. • Church school partnership update – recognition of the strengthening links between the churches and the schools and how this impacts positively on the communities. • Mental health and wellbeing – award has been achieved and there is good practice in place. Next steps following the award and wellbeing survey have been identified and will be monitored next year. <p>Resources Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous monitoring of budgets: deficit budgets are still forecast. • Savings on catering • New teacher appointed <p>Standards Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing structure • Data headlines • Pupil presentation • Behaviour update
18	<p>AOB Correspondence – there is a complaint at stage 2 of the Policy and a panel has therefore been formed.</p> <p>Governors gave thanks to the PTA team at HA for organising events including the HU5k, and a thank you to the Friends of Iron Acton school for the support that they give to the school.</p>



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	Governors gave a very big thank you to all staff at both schools. Governors recognise it isn't always an easy job but are very grateful for all that they do.
19	Headlines and impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions around SEND: both schools have above the national average of SEND children. • Re-Appointment of co-opted governors and election of chair • Noted that schools have identified savings for the current financial year amounting to £21k against budget. • Self-evaluation of Committees achievements, challenges and aspirations.
20	Date of next meeting – 14th October 2024, 7pm, Iron Acton Primary School

Action Checklist

WHO	ACTION	WHEN
KB	H&S report to be shared with all governors	23/7/24
RT	Letter regarding school funding to be sent to the LA	23/7/24
BC	Co-ordinate Website check	31/10/24
JG	Pursue recruitment of new Clerk	Ongoing
KB	Arrange dates for Resources Committee meetings	23/7/24
RT	Book the room at The Lamb for Governor Offsite – 30/9/24	23/7/24