



## Believing and Achieving Together to be The Best We Can Be

Meeting of the Full Governing Board of OTTER VALLEY FEDERATION					
Date/Time	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 6:30pm	Location	Feniton C of E Primary School		
Attendees	Initials		Attendees	Initials	
Amanda Fulford	AF	Executive Headteacher	Sarah Walls	SW	Foundation Governor <b>Finance Lead</b>
Daphne Sherwood	DS	Foundation Governor <b>Staffing Lead</b>	Matt Sullivan	MS	Foundation Governor <b>Curriculum Lead</b>
Eddie Smith	ES	Parent Governor <b>SEND &amp; Inclusion Lead</b>	Mark Humphries	MH	Foundation Governor <b>Safeguarding Lead</b>
Pete Button	PB	Staff Governor <i>Head of School</i>	Jamie Lawrence	JL	Foundation Governor
Present					
Jess Bengier		Clerk to Governors	Nikki Myer		Federation Business Manager
Apologies					
Claire Polverino	CP	Foundation Governor <b>Parent &amp; Community Lead</b>	Alex Pryor	AP	<b>Co-opted Governor</b>
Simon Richards	SR	Parent Governor			
Absent					
Lydia Cook	LC	Ex Officio Governor	Eleanor Ramsbottom	ER	Parent Governor

Ref	Discussion, Action or Decision	Owner/ Decision	Date Due
1.	<b>Opening Prayer</b> Sarah Walls opened meeting with a prayer		
2.	<b>Apologies for Absence/ Absences Sanctioned</b> Alex Pryor – Work Commitments Simon Richards – Family Commitments- Claire Polverino – Ill Health <b>Absences sanctioned</b>  No apologies received from Lydia Cook or Eleanor Ramsbottom		
3.	<b>Declaration of Interests invited and declared</b> None declared		

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4.	<p><b>Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting:</b> FGB 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 Minutes circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p><b>Proposal: to approve the minutes of the meeting of FGB Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 and signed by the chair</b> Agreed by all present</p>	<p>Proposal: to approve the minutes of the meeting of 21.10.2024 as a correct record and signed by the chair</p>	<p>Agreed by all present</p>
5.	<p><b>Matters Arising from the minutes not on the agenda</b></p> <p>None noted</p>		
6.	<p><b>Questions and matters arising from the Finance Lead Governor Report</b> Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes as an appendix. Additional reports circulated at the meeting</p> <p>NM gave an update to changes to Finance software supported by Devon County Council. Our original system is MIS and Finest which links in with SIMS and DCC are moving to Bromcom. We are under contract with ESS for another two years but it has been suggested that Bromcom will buy us out of the project so that we do not have to pay for two systems for two years.</p> <p>NM has explored if there were other options for us, but it looks like due to how the new system is being rolled out we have very little option but to follow DCC and move to BromCom.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the poor timing/ planning of this change due in the Spring term when budget setting is occurring.</p> <p>It was asked who we could flag our concerns to at DCC, NM reported that the Finance Officers and maintained schools business managers</p> <p><b>Agreed: to give notice to ESS by the end of the Autumn term</b></p> <p><b>Action: Finance Governor and FGB to monitor procurement costs for finance systems in the Spring term as these will no longer be top-sliced as part of our DCC funding,</b></p> <p>School Meals Provision Report distributed at the meeting. AF reported that we have made savings with Educatering, but there has been an overspend due to additional staffing hours and essential repairs and replacements</p> <p>AF reported that the Pupil Premium Grant Children costs for the federation are £12,000 per annum and she felt it would not be appropriate to use the PPG funding for this,</p> <p>We need to bring costs down. This could be done by reducing additional hours that are being incurred by</p> <p>MH asked why there is a price difference between us and FORT federation. We only charge FORT for the cost of the meals and they add on their MTA/ staffing costs.</p>		

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	<p>JL are we confident that parents are going to be able to absorb the increase in costs? AF stated that we have made parents aware of the challenges with school meal provision costs and may be able to manage the increased cost of approximately £1 a week.</p> <p>It was noted that DfE has announced 5p increase in school meal payment to £2.58, backdated to September 2024</p> <p><b>Proposal: to increase school meals price to £2.70 per meal for OVF and £2.00 for Foundation Stage and FORT Federation we are negotiating a meal price of £2.25 from £2.00.</b>  <b>Agreed by all present</b></p> <p><u>Breakfast/ After School Club at Feniton</u>  Report distributed at the meeting and will be added to the minutes as an appendix. It was noted that we have now taken the rent for 2022-23 and 2023-24 from the budget alongside a slight drop off in numbers and an increase in vulnerable (PPG) children attending (their places are funded by PPG grant)</p> <p>SW what are the staff ratios, could we review this? We only have one member of staff that has contracted hours, all other staff are on casual hours workers. AF is discussing with the relevant staff how hours will be managed.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the local geographic demand. It was noted that all the local provision charges different amounts and for different time sessions.</p> <p>ES asked AF whether they would be asking parents for feedback on what they are looking for from the service and what would encourage them to use more sessions. AF confirmed that these are the questions that are going to be sent out as part of a survey.</p> <p>NM is exploring ideas such as clubs which can happen as part of the after-school provision.</p> <p><b>Proposal: to increase cost of sessions by 20p from April 2025</b>  <b>Agreed by all present</b></p> <p>Discussion then focused on rent payments from the wrap around provision.</p> <p><b>Action: Agenda item for the February meeting to decide whether to charge rent to wraparound support for 2025-26</b></p> <p><u>Foundation Stage Unit</u>  Report circulated at the meeting and will be added to the minutes as an appendix. We are in a better position than we budgeted for at TSJ</p> <p>The meeting discussed take up of places and availability of spaces. It was agreed that we do need to increase the cost per hour but do not want to increase rapidly as parents may struggle with the increase.</p>		

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	<p><b>Proposal: to increase session charges from April to £5 for 3/ 4 year olds and £6 for 2 year olds.</b> <b>Agreed by all present</b></p> <p><b>Approval of the budget report for the term</b> Budget reports circulated prior to the meeting and paper copies distributed at the meeting.</p> <p><b>Proposal: to approve the Spring term Budget reports</b> <b>Agreed by all present</b></p> <p><b>Feedback from Finance Audit and GB Approval</b> Report circulated at the meeting. NM was congratulated for the Finance Audit outcomes. There is one action point on purchase orders which NM is getting all staff to follow finance processes</p> <p><b>Proposal: GB approves the Finance Audit Report</b> <b>Agreed by all present</b></p> <p>AF reported that the DCC Funding Consultation 2025-26 has been carried out. We have agreed to the top-slicing for high needs but the proposal that DCC will claw back £21,000 from the school budget where the school permanently excludes a pupil. Headteachers were appalled at this suggestion and fed-back that it was not a viable solution.</p>	<p>Proposal: to approve the Spring term Budget reports</p>	<p>Agreed by all present</p>
6.3	<p><b>School Meals cost – report back from the Finance Lead Governor</b> Discussed earlier in the meeting</p>		
7.	<p><b>Questions and matters arising from the Premises, Security and Health &amp; Safety Lead Governor Report (ACB)</b></p>		
	<p>Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes as an appendix.</p> <p>AF gave an update on the damage caused by the most recent storm. Huge thanks to Lynda the Caretaker and family members who secured the door and made the building safe. The door will need to be replaced.</p> <p>AF confirmed that all tree surveys are being carried, and we are compliant with all health and safety requirements but we cannot mitigate for everything that 'could' happen.</p>		
8.	<p><b>Questions and matters arising from the Personnel Lead Governor Report (ACB)</b></p>		
	<p>Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes as an appendix. AF gave further information on recruitment of a teacher Mitchell McKenzie will be joining TSJ in year 3/ 4 Willow class in January</p>		
9.	<p><b>Questions &amp; matters arising from the Safeguarding Lead Governor Report (ACB)</b></p> <p>Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes as an appendix. No questions arising. MH noted that there was poorer response rate of staff signing to say they had read and understood the KCSIE Part 1. AF</p>		

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	felt that there was no excuse for staff to not to respond to an email and it needs to be improved next year		
9.1	<b>Review of Annual Safeguarding Action Plan</b>		
	Report circulated prior to the meeting.  <b>Proposal: Governors approved the Safeguarding Action Plan 2024-25 Agreed by all present</b>		
10.	<b>Questions arising from Written Update from Admissions Committee (ACB)</b> Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes of the meeting as appendix. Noted that there has been a very low rate of admissions applications this term.  The meeting discussed Teaching Assistant (TA) recruitment and retention for our High Needs EHCP pupils	Noted	
11.	<b>Questions arising from the Written Update from the Pay Committee</b> Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes of the meeting as appendix.  <b>Action: Defer approval of Pay Policy to the next FGB as DCC themselves will not ratify the policy in it's current form</b>		
12.	<b>Review of Governor Monitoring Reports</b>		
12.1	<b>TSJ Pre School</b> Report circulated for review prior to the meeting. No questions arising		
13.	<b>Governance &amp; Leadership (ACB)</b>		
13.1	<b>Governor Training and Introduction to National College Website</b> <b>Action: Clerk to ensure the new governors are booked on to new governor training induction course</b>  <b>Action: National College Website to be an agenda item at the next meeting</b>  <b>Action: Governor Skills Audit to be carried out in Summer term</b>		
13.2	<b>Governor Monitoring</b> AF reviewed what governor monitoring slots are still available, especially Collective Worship. Meeting discussed how popular the Friday Collective Worship session was. This stopped due to the size of the cohorts and fitting in the hall and it may be worth starting again.  Has staff induction been effective – SW to carry out in the Spring term along side collective worship at TSJ		
13.3	<b>Goodbyes and Thank-yous</b> Report circulated prior to the meeting and will be added to the minutes of the meeting as appendix.	Noted	
14.	<b>Policies to Approve</b>		
14.1	<b>Pay Policy 2023 to be ratified by FGB</b>		

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14.2	<b>Proposal: to ratify the Otter Valley Federation Pay Policy 2023</b> Agreed by all present  <b>OVF Health &amp; Safety Policy 2024</b> <b>Proposal: to ratify the Otter Valley Federation Health &amp; Safety Policy 2024</b> Agreed by all present		
15	<b>For information – Policies approved by lead governors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OVF School Emergency Plan 2024</li> <li>• OVF Outdoor Education and Visits Policy 2024</li> </ul>		
16.	<b>Governing Board Correspondence</b>		
	None noted		
17.	<b>Date of next meeting</b> FGB Meeting 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 – Tipton St John		
<b>The meeting closed at 20:26</b>			