

# The Genesis Federation



## Minutes of the Genesis Federation Full Governing Body Meeting Held at Beckley CE primary school on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 5pm. The meeting was quorate for the duration.

Present: Hilary Barton (HB) (Chair), Rose Durban (RD) (proposed Chair), Andrew Button (AB), Rhiannon Chillingworth (RC) (from item 5 onwards), Revd Dr Owen Edwards (OE), Marian Ham (MH), Emma Herbert (EH), Chrissie Johnston (CJ), Ann-Marie Murphy (AM), Revd Teresa Munro (TM), Deborah Ongley (DO), Paul Redstone (PR), Lison Smart (LS), Simon Thurston (ST)

### 1. Welcome, Apologies and Opening Prayer

HB welcomed all to the meeting, especially our new governors, Rose Durban, proposed new chair and Anne-Marie Murphy, new LA Governor. Apologies were received from Robin Redsull. Revd Dr Owen Edwards led the opening prayer.

### 2. Board membership matters

- Following ESCC advice, RD was proposed and elected as new interim chair and co-opted governor.
- Anne-Marie Murphy was welcomed as the LA Governor on the Board.
- The sterling and much appreciated work of Hilary Barton in handing over to the new interim chair was noted and endorsed by the FGB as a whole.
- An update on the Clerk position was provided. A clerk was appointed in August but had resigned shortly afterwards for family reasons. The post had been readvertised with a closing date of 8 October. To date there has been one application. PR mentioned that he knew of another possible application. The chair had been in contact with the chair at Playden school, who are also seeking a clerk, as clerking for both Boards may help recruitment
- The Collaboration Agreement between The Genesis Federation and Playden Primary for 2021-2 academic year was noted.  
**Governors agreed the above appointments and noted the Clerking position.**

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

- The minutes from the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July were accepted and approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 4. Declaration of Business Interests

- Members completed and signed their individual Annual Register of Interests

### 5. Annual Paperwork

- Members completed and signed the declaration paperwork under the Childcare Act 2006
- Governors signed to say they had read Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', updated September 2021

### 6. SDP Approval

- Governors received and discussed the SDP key areas of improvement for each school for 2021 to 2022.

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- Governor Challenges:
  - How do these priorities align with Ofsted and SIAMs inspection readiness?
  - When is each school likely to receive an inspection?
  - How can governors be involved in any self-evaluation work and add value to the process?
- LS explained that the latest advice was for Ofsted inspectors not to undertake 'mock' Ofsted inspections. Schools should focus on ensuring that through a culture of high expectations and high support children were learning, achieving and thriving to their maximum. The SEF was a crucial document in preparing for Ofsted and the focus should be on gathering evidence to support the school's own evaluative judgement. She explained that both schools are in a potential inspection 'window' for an Ofsted and for a SIAMs inspection.
- ST had met with the diocese recently and anticipates a SIAMs inspection in the next two years.
- Both headteachers are keen to share and value comments and challenge from governors on their developing self-evaluations.
- LS and ST highlighted the rationale underpinning each priority, the benefits where it was a shared priority and the reasons why they differed to reflect the distinctive needs of each school, for example approaches to relational behaviour practice (Therapeutic Thinking) at Peasmarsch and embedding the vision across the wider community stakeholders at Beckley.
- Both headteachers explained that the changes to subject leader accountabilities would help provide assurance, within each school, to key stakeholders, and to inspectors, about impact and difference in each school. The previous arrangement of a subject leader responsible for both schools had made ownership and accountability challenging. The headteachers highlighted that Ofsted will only undertake one deep dive with a subject leader.
- Cross federation sharing of practice, CPD and resources, where helpful and appropriate, is encouraged
- Headteachers explained why they had decided to use 'excellent' in relation to curriculum development
- LS provided governors with an overview of Therapeutic Thinking and the way it underpins a whole school relational approach to encouraging and reinforcing behaviour for learning. A governor highlighted how valuable she had found governor training on Therapeutic Thinking.
  - Gov Challenges:
    - How do rewards and consequences fit into the Therapeutic Thinking framework?
    - What's the timeframe for the Beckley Behaviour policy to being fully implemented?
    - How is capacity being managed at Beckley
    - How is the Relationships and sex education and health education (RHSE) curriculum working in practice and starting to embed?
- EH explained that Therapeutic Thinking enabled a structured approach to intrinsic self-worth rather than the risks of other approaches using extrinsic rewards that can be misconstrued as bribing to achieve good behaviour. Evidence so far is that it is helping staff manage situations better in and around the school.

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- ST responded that the approach being adopted to ensure the behaviour policy translated to practice was similar to the way that Beckley's vision had been embedded into beliefs and behaviours in school.
- ST explained the ways in which staff are deployed to ensure the SENCo and the Early Career Teacher (ECT) have study time and there is leadership coverage throughout the week.
- LS highlighted that staff are aware that Y6 had missed out on some key RSE and HE vocabulary and concepts during COVID and curriculum planning is aimed at making sure children are confident in these areas by transition to secondary school.

## 7. Policies for Approval:

- The following Federation policies were received, discussed and approved:
  - Code of Conduct
  - Online Safety Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy
- Discussion included:
  - Governor challenges:
    - How were online learning risks mitigated when COVID necessitated learning at home?
    - How were school computers virus and malware checked?
    - How were staff updated on safeguarding?
    - How far did the online safety policy impact on governors personal family use?
- LS and ST explained the safeguards in place to ensure staff did not live stream on their own and if they were working from home, ensured they maintained the school expectations about appropriate dress and computer background image. The heads also explained they had communicated clearly with parents about, where possible, children not sharing what their bedrooms or homes looked like and making sure children were appropriately dressed.
- ST explained that Smothwall software was in place across both schools to prevent inappropriate ICT access and prevent virus attacks.

The extent to which the Online Safety policy impacted on personal use by governors was explained briefly at the meeting (8.1 of the policy applied to Genesis Federation use and 8.2 to personal use). This was later clarified in a subsequent e mail to the Governing Body by ST confirming that It is correct that all Genesis staff and governors should be advised not to publish private thoughts and opinions on any social media platform, due to the potential for reputational damage. This is something that all staff will have been made aware of, as mentioned in 8.2

## 8. Impact of meeting

- Children's learning and life-chances were at the heart of the presentations, discussion and challenges throughout the meeting, with a shared goal to ensure children at both Beckley and Peasmarsh are safe, happy and learning and achieving well.

## 9. AOB

- RD will join the Standards Monitoring committee
- AM will lead on EYFS
- PR will lead on SEND
- RR has been contacted about leading on Health and Safety and being part of the Finance and Personnel Committee

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- TM will lead on Safeguarding and Child Protection  
10.  
**11. Date of next meeting**
- The (NEW) date for the next FGM was agreed as 2 December 2021 at 5pm.  
**12. Tribute to Helen**
- ST led a moving tribute to and appreciation of Helen Watts, a former Genesis Federation Governor, who died at the end of August  
**13. Presentation to Hilary**
- Vanessa Tomlinson presented flowers and gifts and led a heartfelt appreciation of Hilary's leadership of The Genesis Federation. The FGB joined in a collective thank you for her inspirational guidance and support.