

# The Genesis Federation



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board

Date and Time: Thursday, 7 December 2023, 17:00-19:00  
 Location: Beckley CE School  
 Governors Present: Rose Durban (RD) - Chair  
 Andrew Button (AB)                      Jeff Clements (JC)  
 Vicky Dyer (VD)                              Emma Herbert (EH) (via Teams)  
 Chrissie Johnston (CJ)                      Ann-Marie Murphy (AM)  
 Revd Dr Owen Edwards (OE)              Paul Redstone (PR) – Vice Chair  
 Simon Thurston (ST) – Headteacher  
 Quorum: 6 (50% of the FGB in post)  
 Attending: Colin Barling  
 Clerk: Sue Redstone  
 Apologies: Rhiannon Chillingworth (RC), Lison Smart (LS) - Headteacher  
 Absent:

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome, Apologies and Opening Prayer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 17:00 and welcomed Colin Barling as a potential new Governor.</li> <li>- Fr Owen led the opening prayer.</li> <li>- Apologies were received and accepted from RC and LS.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted subject to the following changes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Date of the meeting to be corrected from Thursday, 6 July 2023 to Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request via email that the Board vote on co-opting VD to the Governing Board. <b>Complete. VD was co-opted 27.09.23.</b></li> <li>2. Contact Governors to ask whether they know anyone who may have Ethos or H&amp;S experience who could join the board as an Associate Member. <b>Request was sent out and potential new Governor identified.</b></li> <li>3. Provide a list of Safeguarding areas likely to be covered by Ofsted. <b>JC has drafted a list, which is to be reviewed and sent out.</b></li> <li>4. Distribute the standard naming convention for information. <b>Distributed with the minutes of the last meeting.</b></li> <li>5. Distribute slide pack to Governors for review/feedback. <b>Distributed with the minutes of the last meeting.</b></li> <li>6. Request Governor approval of the Peasmarsh SDP via email (using voting buttons). <b>This was agreed via email.</b></li> <li>7. Request Governor approval of the Beckley SDP via email (using voting buttons). <b>This was agreed via email.</b></li> <li>8. PR/CJ to collaborate on monitoring plans. <b>Done.</b></li> </ol>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>JC</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p>

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3.	<p><u>Declaration of Business Interests</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Clerk reminded the Governing Board of the need to review their Declarations of Interest. These have all been loaded onto GovernorHub and Governors need to confirm that these are correct.</li> <li>- The Clerk confirmed that for Governor Declarations of Interest to appear on the Declarations of Interest report, each Governor must click on the Confirm and Submit Your Declarations button in GovernorHub.</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://help.governorhub.com/en/articles/3174427-how-to-add-declarations-of-interest">https://help.governorhub.com/en/articles/3174427-how-to-add-declarations-of-interest</a></p>	
4.	<p><u>Board Membership Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chair/Vice Chair annual elections: The Clerk asked whether any of the Governors present would like to put themselves forward for either of the positions. Both the Chair and Vice Chair confirmed that they were happy to continue if the board was happy for them to do so. RD was re-elected as Chair. PR was re-elected as Vice Chair.</li> <li>- The Clerk confirmed that due to other pressures, David Chaplin had resigned from the board. The Clerk also confirmed the appointment of Jeff Clements to the role of Foundation Governor.</li> <li>- Complaints training: The Clerk highlighted the need to have members of the board familiar with the complaints procedure, in the event of a complaint being made. VD had already signed up for the January course.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Confirm date for Complaints training.</p> <p>Post Meeting Note: The next Complaints training is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tuesday 16th January 10:00-12:00 on Teams, bookable through GovernorHub.</li> </ul>	Closed
5.	<p><u>Chair's Actions and Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finance Audit at Beckley. During the preparation for the audit, the Scheme of Delegation was found to be out of date. The document was reviewed and agreed by PR, AB and the Chair.</li> <li>- Small Schools Conference. This was attended by RD, PR, ST LS and presented several differing partnership arrangements between small schools. A small school is defined as those having fewer than 240 pupils (although for the purposes of this conference and the working group ST is part of, the number is set as below 150). Much of what was discussed was more relevant to the larger schools. However, schools need to be mindful of the significantly falling birth rate across East Sussex over the next 7 or 8 years (13-14%).</li> </ul> <p><u>Governor Question:</u> Was there anything felt to be particularly relevant to our schools? There was a strong push for Federations. One example had a single board of 10 Governors for 4 or 5 schools. The Governors carried out meetings via Teams for screening and then followed up with visits if necessary. However, it was stressed that there is no one size fits all model.</p>	

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	<p><u>Governor Question:</u> Were there any models where there were financial benefits? There may be economies of scale if there are enough schools together. There was only one example which was a two-school Federation, with Federations of 4 or 5 schools being more common.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some Federations had shared subject leaders, but it is more about managing capacity rather than financial gains.</li> <li>- Considerations: Are we sustainable? If our numbers rise or fall, what does this mean? Where are the pressure points?</li> <li>- The Genesis Federation is also part of the Rye Alliance, consisting of 6 primary schools and 1 secondary school. One example where this has been of benefit is the support provided by the Education Welfare Officer.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Partnerships and alliances to be added to the next agenda.</p> <p><u>Governor Question:</u> Are there other areas where we could make use of the Alliance? There are 3 main areas that the Alliance are concentrating on: developing maths, phonics and peer to peer support (school to school support).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HT Performance Management. Meetings held with both Head Teachers. Progress in both schools was extremely positive.</li> </ul>	Clerk
6.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finance meetings have been held with both schools.</li> <li>- Beckley: little change from budget. Teaching staff costs have increased, mainly due to the pay awards. Other small variances.</li> <li>- Peasmarsch: challenges due to the falling roll. Need ~90 pupils. Benefits this year: Teaching staff costs and reduction in energy costs by approximately 20%, following a review of usage.</li> <li>- Finance meetings have been planned for Jan/Mar/Apr.</li> </ul> <p>The board recognised the hard work of Charlotte Lane and Christine Charles in managing the finances.</p> <p><u>Governor Question:</u> What is the earliest time we get a view on 2024? There is no definitive list until the end of April, with the closing date being mid-January. Peasmarsch will have 15 leavers in July 2024. However, there is a small year 5 group, with 4 leavers in July 2025.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring visits made to both Peasmarsch and Beckley, focusing on the audits that were carried out.</li> <li>- Peasmarsch: The two immediate actions had both been addressed and good practice adopted.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Two further Safeguarding Monitoring reports to be distributed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beckley: immediate actions have been completed.</li> </ul>	Clerk

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	<p>Action: Discuss Safeguarding training session before the March FGB meeting.</p> <p>Action: Discuss SEND training session before the July FGB meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further visits made this term included pupil voice and discussions with parents. The pupils demonstrated obvious pride in their school.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Safeguarding audit report be made available to FGB.</p>	<p>JC/LS/ST</p> <p>PR/LS/ST</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Link Governor Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MHWB: Two monitoring visits made to Peasmarsch, focusing on PSHE and the curriculum. Positive feedback and impressive engagement. Planning visits to Beckley in the New Year and linking up with Safeguarding and Q of E.</li> <li>- SEND: Coordinated with CJ/VD regarding monitoring visits. Met with parents to address concerns raised.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Arrange to visit Peasmarsch school to speak to staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ethos: A new priest living in Peasmarsch has been recruited: Rev Elizabeth (Liz) Varley. Handover meeting held with Marian Ham.</li> <li>- Q of E: visits made to Beckley and Peasmarsch and reports distributed. Monitoring plan has been created referencing the SDP.</li> </ul> <p>Decision: The FGB agreed the Quality of Education monitoring plan.</p>	<p>AMM</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Leadership Reports/School Development Plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peasmarsch: The Chair asked that any issues relating to the Head Teacher's report be raised via email in the New Year, due to the Head Teacher being unwell. The board acknowledged the work that the school had done on attendance, which has had a positive impact.</li> <li>- Beckley: the Head Teacher highlighted how effective the FGB have been over the past year and thanked the board for all their work.</li> <li>- The challenges are similar to the last report. The school determined attendance threshold is 95% - the figures measured against the national target (90%) are shown in brackets.</li> <li>- The board discussed the attendance threshold and asked that the DfE threshold be reported against. The Board recognised the value in the higher threshold that Beckley strive to achieve.</li> </ul> <p><u>Governor Question:</u> Regarding pupils with mental health concerns, is that 14 on the register? This seems high for a small school.</p> <p>Pupils are placed on the SEN Register if they have a formal diagnosis or are in the process of getting one. A pupil on the SEN register might fit into several categories of SEN. SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) is a category that officially covers quite a wide range of diagnoses and 14 pupils have SEMH as part of their diagnosis. There are other pupils in school with SEMH-related issues who are not on the SEN register, so in reality, the actual number is</p>	

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	higher. This is a problem across schools.							
10.	<p><u>Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order to make the policy reviews more manageable, the Chair and Vice Chair have defined a lead reviewer and second reviewer for each policy, who should bring their recommendation for approval to the FGB. A Federation policy should be used where possible.</li> <li>• Federation Behaviour Principles. Approved by the FGB.</li> <li>• Beckley Charging and Remissions Policy. Approved subject to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Optional extras: extended day services: note to be added regarding cases where pupil numbers fluctuate.</li> <li>○ Residential visits: clarify “one or more of the following benefits”.</li> <li>○ Residential visits: Child Tax Credit financial year needs to be updated.</li> <li>○ Policy should be for the Federation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Intimate Care Policy. Approved by the FGB. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There may be a need to change the reference the female in the future.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Action: Federation Intimate Care Policy to be distributed in the New Year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peasmarsh SEND Information Report. Approved by the FGB.</li> <li>• SEND Policy. Approved by the FGB, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Addition of link to the SEND Information Reports.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Genesis Whistleblowing Policy. Approved by the FGB, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CMT to be clarified as Corporate Management Team at East Sussex County Council.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Genesis Code of Conduct. Approved by the FGB, subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pg 31: many to be replaced by any.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Policies Approved since last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Genesis Federation Scheme of Delegation.</li> </ul>	EH						
11.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Chair wished all the members of the Board a peaceful Christmas break and thanked everyone for their commitment.</li> <li>- The Board discussed a change of date for the next meeting. Monday, Wednesday and Friday are difficult for members of the board.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Follow up on alternative day of the week for the next meeting.</p>	Clerk						
12.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Date</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Event</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Location</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Thursday 22nd March 17:00-19:00 (TBC)</td> <td>FGB</td> <td>Beckley CE School</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Event	Location	Thursday 22nd March 17:00-19:00 (TBC)	FGB	Beckley CE School	
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	The meeting closed at 7:10pm.		
	<p><b><u>New Actions</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partnerships and alliances to be added to the next agenda.</li> <li>2. Two further Safeguarding Monitoring reports to be distributed.</li> <li>3. Discuss Safeguarding training session before the March FGB meeting.</li> <li>4. Discuss SEND training session before the July FGB meeting.</li> <li>5. Safeguarding audit report be made available to FGB.</li> <li>6. Arrange to visit Peasmarsh school to speak to staff.</li> <li>7. Federation Intimate Care Policy to be distributed in the New Year.</li> <li>8. Follow up on alternative day of the week for the next meeting.</li> </ol>	<p><b><u>Due Date</u></b></p> <p>29/02/24 31/12/23 29/02/24 31/05/24 29/02/24 29/02/24 29/02/24 29/02/24</p>	<p>Clerk Clerk JC/ST/LS PR/ST/LS JC AMM EH Clerk</p>