



## The Viridis Federation of Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden Primary Schools

### Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting

Held on 7 October 2021 from 6pm to 7:45pm at Orchard Primary School

Governor	Role	Present at this Meeting	Attendance 2021-22
James Gowland (JG)	Co-opted Governor and Chair	✓	1/1
Laura Theobold (LT)	Co-opted Governor and Vice Chair	✓	1/1
Victoria Crawford (VC)	Co-opted Governor	✓	1/1
Hannah Lownsborough (HL)	Co-opted Governor	✓	1/1
Lenna Marson (LM)	Co-opted Governor	✓	1/1
Chisara Nwabara (CN)	Co-opted Governor	✗	0/1
Alberta Senyah (AS)	Co-opted Governor	✓	1/1
Sara Walsingham (SW)	Co-opted Governor	✓	1/1
Cllr Ian Rathbone (IR)	LA Governor	✓	1/1
Aya Haidar (AH)	Parent Governor	✓	1/1
Kay Richardson (KR)	Parent Governor	✓	1/1
Claudia Moreira (CM)	Staff Governor	✓	1/1
Rachel Davie (RD)	Executive Headteacher	✓	1/1
<b>Others in attendance:</b>			
Aimee Walker (AW)	Headteacher, Orchard School	✓	1/1
Stephen O'Brien (SOB)	Headteacher, Southwold School	✓	1/1
Rachel Adams (RA)	Headteacher, Hoxton Garden School	✗	0/1
<b>Clerk:</b>			
Ghulam Abbas (GA)	Hackney Education	✓	1/1
<b>Governor Attendance at this Meeting</b>		<b>92%</b>	
<b>Governor Attendance Year to Date</b>		<b>92%</b>	

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING

## Non-Confidential – Main Business

### 1. Apologies/consent for absence

- 1.1. Apologies were received from CN and RA, which were accepted.
- 1.2. The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

### 2. Governing Body Organisation

- 2.1. Membership of the Full Governing Body (FGB) (Paper 2a) was reviewed. The composition of the FGB had changed since the last meeting. JG welcomed AH to her first meeting. AH had joined the FGB as a Parent Governor. Also, CN had joined the FGB as a Co-opted Governor.
- 2.2. There had also been changes at the school sub-committee level. Hayat Omer had joined the Hoxton Garden sub-committee. Through the Hackney Young Governors pilot scheme, the Orchard sub-committee had managed to recruit Samson Brough.
- 2.3. Terms of Reference (Paper 2b) was reviewed. The terms of office for AS and LM were renewed for another four years by the FGB, as they had come to an end in August 2021.
- 2.4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair – IR nominated JG as the Chair of Governors, that was seconded by KR. There were no other nominations and JG was unanimously elected as Chair of Governors.
- 2.5. JG nominated LT as Vice-Chair, which was seconded by KR. There were no other nominations and LT was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair.
- 2.6. Terms of Reference (Paper 2b) were reviewed, particularly the terms of office. JG asked if governors were content with the way that their renewal of terms of office had been phased. The phasing had been introduced to ensure that the GB retained consistency and continuity.
- 2.7. The Register of Business Interests (Paper 2c) was reviewed.

#### **Action 1.1: Governors were asked to check the Register of Business Interests and to let RD know of any changes or amendments.**

- 2.8. There were no comments or changes made to the Governors' Code of Conduct (Paper 2d).
- 2.9. The GB meeting calendar for the 2021/22 academic year was reviewed (Paper 2e). A Governor visit morning was scheduled for 20 October 2021 at Hoxton Garden. The next full governing body was scheduled for 27 January 2022 at Southwold.

#### **Action 1.2: Governors to let RD and JG know if there are any clashes with Governing Body or School Sub-Committee meeting dates.**

### 3. Agreement of minutes from the last meeting & any actions arising

- 3.1. JG went through the actions from the last FGB meeting, which was held on 20 May 2021, the following comments were made:
  - 3.1.1. Action 7.4: the resources minutes, detailing discussions on spending plans and the budget for 2021-22 had been shared with Governors.
  - 3.1.2. Action 11.1: Governors to review the governance meeting dates for 2021-22 for any issues, was closed.
- 3.2. It was commented that attendance at FGB meetings last year was 97%, which was very high. Virtual meetings had really improved governor attendance for many governing bodies. There was discussion about whether some meetings should be virtual if they help to improve governor attendance.

- 3.3. A suggestion was made about running hybrid meetings whereby governors who could not attend in person would be able to join in via video conference. However, the experience of some governors was that such meetings were not productive and those joining in via video conference were not able to effectively participate due technological limitations.
- 3.4. It was agreed that meetings should either be fully in-person, face-to-face, or entirely virtual with everyone joining in by video conference. A hybrid approach was not an option. So, it was agreed that attendance of governors would be monitored and if it became an issue then move to virtual meetings would be considered by the FGB.
- 3.5. There were no other matters arising from the minutes.
- 3.6. The minutes of the last FGB meeting, held on 20 May 2021, were APPROVED as an accurate record by the FGB.

## **4. Executive Headteacher's Report Autumn 2021**

### **Leadership and Management**

- 4.1. Referring to Paper 4, RD reported that this autumn the Federation has returned to some kind of normality. The schools have been able to fully refocus on curriculum as risk management of Covid is well embedded.
- 4.2. The summer 2021 teacher assessment data demonstrated that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils were achieving broadly in line with previous years. Each school sub-committee this term will be asked to look into the data for disadvantaged pupils.
- 4.3. The summer teacher assessments have shown that the Federation has been successful through the recovery curriculum in identifying and closing gaps in children's learning. This has meant teachers working together with their leaders, having a strong focus on data monitoring and robust moderation. The national statutory assessment tests (SATs) are scheduled to go ahead in Summer 2022 and will include the phonics check, the times tables check, the KS1 and KS2 SAT tests.
- 4.4. The statutory baseline testing for Reception pupils was undertaken in September. The Federation was an early adopter of this last academic year and staff are therefore familiar with it. SOB has been leading on the Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) reforms across the Federation, including the training of staff. A robust moderation of EYFS data is planned across the schools to ensure the Federation has an accurate as possible baseline from which to assess and measure the progress that pupils will be making.
- 4.5. Staff across all the schools attended three days of INSET at the start of September. This was really useful for reviewing and embedding the core curriculum and core processes, and provided a good lead into this term.
- 4.6. Newly qualified teachers are no longer called NQTs. They have now been renamed by the DfE as Early Careers Teachers (ECTs). The framework for ECTs now consists of a two-year induction period before they can reach qualified teacher status, as supposed to the one year under the NQT framework. This is a good development giving new teachers more time to develop and refine their pedagogical skills. As a result, the Federation has designed and is implementing its own bespoke programme for ECTs. Recently Qualified Teachers (NQTs last year) are getting additional release time this year as new teacher support due to missed teaching time during partial closure.
- 4.7. There have also been changes to school leadership. A new Deputy Headteacher has been recruited for Orchard and an Assistant Headteacher for Southwold. The leadership teams across the three schools are currently at full capacity. New teaching staff are being supported through personalised induction programmes. All teachers have also attended class context meetings, to discuss the needs of their class and cohort with specific

interventions having been agreed and mapped out for this term.

- 4.8. Across all three schools a structure of 'deep dives' has been introduced for curriculum reviews following a trial last year. This term the focus is on reading and this should support school leaders to articulate the curriculum intent and aims to staff.
- 4.9. Half termly newsletters have been sent to all parents and they have also been given the opportunity to meet their child's classroom teacher. This has enabled teachers to start to build relationships with new and existing parents, which they have not been able to do because of Covid. The Federation has also undertaken 'bring a dad or a significant adult male to school' morning, which was well attended. There were 141 visiting Southwold, and 88 visiting Hoxton and 211 visiting Orchard. World Week is also planned for next week to celebrate culture, diversity and belonging with slightly adapted activities to ensure social distancing.
- 4.10. The Federation has also successfully inducted a Communications Manager to work across the three schools. This is new role is currently being shaped by RD. The aim is for it to improve all the Federation's communications, which will include publications, the school websites, social media, pupil recruitment and general marketing.

#### **Premises / Health & Safety**

- 4.11. RD reported all staff had attended safeguarding training as part of the INSET days. This training included specific safeguarding knowledge for example child sex exploitation, peer-on-peer abuse, online safety and low-level concerns in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 guidance.
- 4.12. During the summer the Orchard playground has been re-tarmacked. The rolling programme of painting across the schools also re-started. Scaffolding has been erected around Hoxton Garden for the façade works, which should be completed in December.
- 4.13. Playground audits have been successfully undertaken across all school sites. There are no major concerns and small-scale remedial actions have been identified and addressed.
- 4.14. All staff will be offered flu vaccinations, which have been scheduled for November 2021.

#### **Core Professional Development (CPD)**

- 4.15. The Headteacher Report sets out the core training that is taking place this term for teachers and teaching assistants (TAs).
- 4.16. The majority of training for teachers is being delivered locally on each school site to minimise staff having to travel across sites given the challenges of travel across Hackney after school. The CPD for teachers will continued to be monitored to ensure it is meaningful, purposeful and accessible for all. TAs will continue to receive their CPD on site.

#### **Current Federation Priorities**

- 4.17. The Federation's current priorities are around implementing the Early Careers Teacher Framework and supporting their early training and development, which is important. Growing and developing its own high calibre teachers is key to the future success of the Federation.
- 4.18. Ensuring that there is a high standard of provision for PPG, SEND and vulnerable pupils to minimise achievement gaps continues to be a priority. The government has introduced a new template for all schools to complete so that they can better monitor and assess how PPG money is being spent by schools. This will be discussed in more detail at each school sub-committee meeting this term.
- 4.19. Effectively inducting new members of staff and continuing to improve the teaching profile so that all teaching is excellent continues to be a high priority; alongside pupils '*knowing more and remembering more.*'

- 4.20. Pupil attendance across the schools is strong and the Federation is proud of that. So, there is a strong focus on sustaining that attendance and ensuring it remains above 96%.
- 4.21. To support Hackney Council the Federation has agreed to take in eight Afghan refugee children who will be starting in November at Hoxton Garden School.
- 4.22. Lastly, the Federation is prioritising the further development of pupil and parental oracy around online and technological safety. Changes to the ICT and PSHE curriculums have been made to support this.
- 4.23. The FGB was asked to be mindful of falling school rolls. Although not a significant concern for the Federation ~~priority~~, it is a Hackney priority and RD has taken part in a number of borough wide discussions on the subject. Viridis Schools have so far not really been affected by falling rolls but it has had a significant effect on some other schools in the borough.
- 4.24. **HL asked what the future forecast was for pupil numbers and rolls?** Pupil numbers and school rolls are projected to fall but it is difficult to predict by how much and over what period. Covid and the increase in home working has meant a number of families are either moving out of the borough or out London altogether. It is something that Federation needs to be mindful of but has good strategies in place to combat, like the ones used at Hoxton, to maintain and increase roll numbers. The new Communications Manager will also ensure that the good reputation of the Federation schools is publicised widely and will support pupil recruitment. It was confirmed that the Federation was not unique in having a central Communications Manager and this is a supportive addition to communication strategy.
- 4.25. **HL asked how families were feeling about vaccines and whether there was any hesitancy?** The local community is very engaged and supportive of following Covid rules / procedures. The schools have been open about Covid and the cases in schools through transparent communication. The Federation is not aware of any hesitancy or anti-vaccine groups or campaigners amongst its parents.
- 4.26. **LT asked about the current Covid situation across the schools?** The schools are stable and managing well. They are continuing to follow many of the Covid protocols from last year particularly around hygiene. Although, there is no longer a requirement to have a Covid risk assessment in place, the Federation has continued to have one in place alongside the expected contingency plans in case there is a Covid outbreak. KR added as a parent she had been very reassured about how the schools were handling any cases or outbreaks. The Federation has had a few confirmed cases but they have been handled well and there has been little to no disruption to attendance and or learning.
- 4.27. **JG asked what was attendance like nationally?** During the summer term national attendance was around 88% but the DfE have yet to publish any national attendance figures. Daily attendance figures have been shared with the DfE across September.
- 4.28. **JG asked about Ofsted?** Ofsted have resumed their normal in-person inspections, there is a focus on Covid and how schools are providing remote education and what they are doing to help pupils catch up. Orchard are due a full inspection which could happen any time this academic year or beyond. It was commented that Ofsted inspections were approximately two years behind schedule and that schools are given about half a day's notice.
- 4.29. **VC asked about staff morale?** A staff survey was conducted in the summer term. The results of that survey were very positive given the context of Covid and partial closures. Engagement with the survey was also very good with a 131 out of total of 171 staff (i.e. 77%) completing the survey.
- 4.30. **IR asked for the word oracy to be added to the glossary.**

## 5. Feedback from the School Sub-Committees

- 5.1. **Southwold** – SOB reported that at their last meeting they had reviewed June 2021 teacher assessment data. This showed that around 76% of pupils were on track to achieve their targets in reading, writing and maths. This was broadly in line with previous years and very positive given the partial closure last year. Progress was also positive and it showed the impact of the key skills sessions that pupils were having every day during 2020 – 2021.
- 5.2. The teaching profile was then discussed and the school target of 50% of teaching to be outstanding was just missed. However, the number of outstanding teachers increased from 13 to 15. One teacher left the school at the end of year to move abroad.
- 5.3. Southwold hosted a 'Best Practice Visit' for the New Wave Federation (a group of schools in Hackney) who came to look at the Viridis curriculum. It was nice to showcase the work of the school and the feedback from the visit was very positive.
- 5.4. Operational data was then reviewed. The proportion of pupil on free school meals (FSM) had increased from 32% to 40%, which was significant. Procedures and 1-2-1 induction meetings with parents have been put in place to ensure all FSM eligible pupils were identified and captured. Attendance during the summer term was 96% and is currently running at 96.2%
- 5.5. At the time of the sub-committee meeting there had been no Covid cases. However, there have been four confirmed cases so far this term and all have been in different year groups.
- 5.6. **JG asked if Best Practice visits were done the other way?** Yes, they have been done with many Federation teachers having visited a number of schools across Hackney. However, visits have not been possible for the last 18 months because of Covid.
- 5.7. **VC asked about the potential partnership with another local that was discussed during a FGB last year?** RD confirmed that partnership would not be progressing any further.
- 5.8. It was clarified that WEE stood for White Eastern European pupils.
- 5.9. **Hoxton Garden** – LT reported that the Hoxton sub-committee had had a similar discussion to the Southwold sub-committee. The progress pupils in Years 2 to 6, had made since returning to school was reviewed. Most of them were working in line with year-end expectations in reading, writing and maths. Year 1 pupils were slightly below in reading and their progress is going to be reviewed again at the next meeting. Otherwise, the recovery curriculum was working well.
- 5.10. Staff turnover was also discussed as seven teachers left the school over the summer. Most of that turnover was due to the teachers relocating out of London. However, the school was fully recruited for this September.
- 5.11. The sign up for Reception was really good at Hoxton with 31 out of the total 55 pupils coming up from the Nursery, which shows what can be done with some good PR and publicity.
- 5.12. The sub-committee then reviewed and talked about the implicit bias action plan. This involved reviewing the curriculum to eliminate any bias during teaching and included refreshing texts and resources to ensure they are applicable to all.
- 5.13. **Orchard** – AW reported that their sub-committee also discussed the summer term data. This showed that the majority of pupils at Orchard were at their expected levels in reading, writing and maths. Year group data was also reviewed and this showed all had made better than expected progress. EHCP children were then discussed and the incremental progress they were making which was below expectation but showed progress from their starting points.
- 5.14. Staffing was discussed as four teachers left in July with three relocating outside of London. The Apprentice teachers were all successful in finishing their apprenticeships. The Deputy Headteachers from across the federation carried out a subject study visit on science.
- 5.15. There had been no exclusions since the last meeting in the Spring Term. AW then fed back about four bullying investigations where inappropriate language had been used looking at the child interactions, using pupil voice to understand their perceptions. No bullying was

established but appropriate actions have been taken to support pupils and their families.

- 5.16. Attendance was 96.3% during the summer term and remains at 96% this term. There were no cases of Covid during the summer term.
- 5.17. RD added that the government had provided funding for Covid catch-up and that would be included in the school's Pupil Premium statement which would be published by December.
- 5.18. **AH asked whether a case of bullying could lead to an exclusion?** RD explained the different stages of the behaviour policy and the processes that the schools go through to improve behaviour. Without any history or additional context, it would be rare that a single isolated case of bullying would lead to an exclusion. In many exclusion cases there usually is history or chronology of how the school has reached that point including a record of all the support put in place to help the child. SOB then explained the context behind the two fixed term exclusions at Southwold.

## 6. Consideration of SIP 3 Reports

- 6.1. The Summer SIP 3 visits had been conducted in person. The reason the reports have been brought to the FGB is because the autumn sub-committee agendas are full. Normally, the SIP reports would go to the sub-committees.
- 6.2. A key theme of the SIP 3 visits was to look at leadership structures and staffing. The reports demonstrate the stability of leadership structures across the three schools and staffing contexts of each school.
- 6.3. On assessment, the SIPs were interested in two key year groups, Year 2 and Year 6. There was no SATs data for Year 6, but the teacher assessment data for Year 6 was strong. The SIPs had no concerns about any of the teacher assessment data as it had been rigorously scrutinised and robustly moderated.
- 6.4. The teaching profile was reviewed and learning walks were undertaken, which went well. These looked at the school reported areas of strength and school reported areas for development.
- 6.5. The SIP then looked at key areas of action and impact. A common focus across the three schools is the SEND provision and how it supports individual children to progress against their targets. Year 6 target setting was another common area which will be reviewed in the sub-committees this term.
- 6.6. Overall, the three reports were healthy and reflected the strong positions of all three of the schools within the Federation. The next SIP visits are scheduled for November.
- 6.7. **KR asked about the feasibility study on the caretaker's house at Hoxton Garden?** RD confirmed that feasibility to convert the caretaker's house into an Arts studio and a community space had been completed. The study was with the local authority awaiting formal approval for the conversion from a number of different departments.

## 7. Link Governors and Training

- 7.1. Paper 7a, proposed the link governor responsibilities for 2021/22 along with a structured cycle for each link governor to report to the FGB at least once during the academic year.
- 7.2. The link governors were JG for safeguarding; HL for health and safety; LT for teaching, learning and the curriculum and LM for inclusion. JG would then report to the FGB at the autumn meeting; HL and LT at the spring FGB meeting and LM at the summer meeting. The FGB AGREED the link responsibilities and the schedule for reporting.
- 7.3. A training schedule was shared (Paper 7b), and all Governors were encouraged to attend the training offered by Hackney Education. All Governors should have received login details about to access and book themselves on courses.

**Action 1.3: Governors to contact RD if they have not received their login details to access the training offered by Hackney Education.**

## **8. Consideration of key policies to be updated**

- 8.1. The Viridis' model **Safeguarding Policy** had been restructured and revised to clearly identify specific safeguarding concerns like peer-on-peer abuse, online safety and mental health. Staff have also received training on these specific safeguarding threads. The revised structure should also make it easier to access and use the policy.
- 8.2. **AH asked who mostly picks up on safeguarding concerns is it staff or pupils?** It is mostly staff but children, through the curriculum are made aware of specific safeguarding concerns and what to do if they are concerned. If there are concerns depending on the nature of them, the child and parents are usually made aware of them. KR suggested that on the safeguarding area of the website there should be an email address so that parents could easily email the DSL with any issues or concerns. The FGB thought this was a good idea. An email link will be made available on the page.
- 8.3. The **EYFS Policy** sits in front of the early years curriculum setting out its values and principles. This was a new policy and reflected the heightened expectations of the new EY framework and incorporates the two-year learning cycle for children.
- 8.4. In line with the new EYFS curriculum which has a big focus on reducing workloads, the policy has reduced the number of observations in EYFS. Lastly, the policy includes a section on transitioning children from EYFS to KS1.
- 8.5. The **PSHE Policy** is also a new policy which sits alongside the statutory Relationship and Sex Education Policy. The policy sets out the principles for PSHE and is fully aligned with the PSHE Association's requirements and topics for PSHE teaching.
- 8.6. The FGB APPROVED the Safeguarding Policy, EYFS Policy and PSHE Policy.

## **9. Health and Safety**

- 9.1. The COVID Risk Assessment (Paper 9a) was noted by the FGB. Although, not required to have a risk assessment, the Federation had continued to keep one as a way of ensuring staff remained focus on measures to protect staff and pupils.
- 9.2. The Outbreak Management Plan (Paper 9b) was noted by the FGB. This plan set out the measures and protocols for managing a Covid outbreak, which includes a remote learning offer being available to all children.

## **10. Any Confidential Business**

- 10.1. No confidential business or matters were raised.

## **11. Other Supporting Papers**

- 11.1. Governors noted the glossary of common terms.

The meeting finished at 7:50pm.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**James Gowland**  
Chair of the Full Governing Body (FGB)



