



Downland Village Schools Federation

Minutes of a meeting of the full governing body held virtually on Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 3:30 pm

Present: Trish Bancroft, David Bertwistle, Paul Brown, Jeremy Cogman, Edward Doyle, Steph Garwood, Rita Harrison-Roach, Chris Hawker, Susie McAuley, Kate O’Kelly, Sarah O’Malley, Neil Ryder.

In attendance: Pippa Bass (clerk).

1. Welcome and apologies

NR welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Hannah Pasfield and Margaret Farwell.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Urgent matters not covered on the agenda

None.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2020 were approved.

5. Matters arising from the last meeting

a. The actions from the last meeting were reviewed:

Reference	Who	Action
2020.09.16-8a	DB	Follow-up on any outstanding conversations between governors and their associated staff members. Complete. Governors reported back on their individual conversations, which had all been positive. NR agreed to cover HP’s staff members.
2020.10.21-5b	NR	Set up a small group of members from both school forums to take forward work on the websites. Postpone until the federation considerations have been resolved.
2020.10.21-5b	DB	Circulate summary of contingency plan for home-schooling. Events had overtaken this action, however, DB agreed to circulate the new remote learning policy, which is required to be posted on school websites.
2020.10.21-6e	NR	Finalise the ‘new parent’ survey with the suggested changes (TTG forum) and discuss with SLT. Postpone until later in the term.
2020.10.21-9	NR / RHR	Review existing safeguarding training courses and either recommend them or propose a separate training session from SG. Carry forward. SG/RHR to discuss further.
2020.10.21-9	HP, KO, JC, TB	Read Part II of KCSIE. Complete.
2020.10.21-9	RHR	Arrange a safeguarding meeting for Rake with PB. Complete.
2020.10.21-10	JC	Discuss an outline plan for improving the school websites with HP. Postpone until the federation considerations have been resolved.
2020.12.02-6b	DB	Provide recommendations for SLT pay progression. Postpone until the federation considerations have been resolved.
2020.12.02-9	DB	Follow-up with the office manager at Rogate about GDPR. NR/DB to discuss separately.

2020.12.02-11	Clerk	Circulate a table showing which policies are associated with each governor role. Complete. Clerk to add a timetable for policies with a 2+ year review cycle on the review planner.
2020.12.02-12	SG	Follow-up on the distribution of the Rogate Review, which HP had not received. Complete.

6. Federation proposal – decisions required

- NR explained that the federation proposal had been developed with advice from WSCC and HR. Governors confirmed they had reviewed the federation proposal document, including the Statement of Intent, and unanimously approved it.
- Governors also approved a delegation of authority to the Joint Federation Committee for any final changes to the federation proposal, as necessary.
- Discussion on the proposed communications to parents, staff, etc. was deferred.
- NR agreed to provide draft surveys for governors to review. These would be issued during the 6 weeks consultation period.

Governors thanked NR and DB for preparing all the documentation for the federation consultation.

7. HT report

DB provided his report – see Annex A.

Q Will you be asking for a discount on the school meals that were sub-standard?

A I am pursuing discussions with the supplier.

SG thanked SM and PB for their support on IT, which had been crucial in enabling the teachers to deliver learning on-line. Governors congratulated DB on the phonics test results and re-iterated their thanks to all staff for the continued achievements during this very difficult period.

8. Policies

NR asked the clerk to collate comments on any outstanding policies that are due for review.

9. Safeguarding

Governors thanked RHR for her visit report from Rake. RHR and SG confirmed that preparation of the RSE curriculum is in hand and the new guidance available from the diocese will be considered.

10. Communication

JC confirmed that his discussions with HP about the school websites are ongoing, although no further work would be done until after the federation process concluded.

11. Future meeting dates/times

Governors noted the future meeting dates:

- Rogate LSF 2nd February 2021 at 4:00pm [post meeting note: moved to 2nd March 2021]
- Rake LSF 3rd February 2021 at 3:30pm [post meeting note: moved to 10th February 2021]
- DVSF FGB 10th February 2021 [post meeting note: cancelled]
- Rake LSF 10th February 2021 at 3:30pm
- Rogate LSF 2nd March 2021 at 4:00pm
- DVSF FGB 17th March 2021
- DVSF FGB 31st March 2021 – federation date
- DVSF FGB 28th April 2021

Governors felt the dates for the LSF meetings might be too close to the start of the federation consultation period and suggested these could be moved back a couple of weeks. The clerk will follow-up with the chairs and HoS. NR will consider whether any of the forthcoming FGB meeting dates should also be moved.

Approved by the full governing body and signed by A Neil Ryder

Date: 23rd February 2021

ACTIONS:

Reference	Who	Action	By when
2020.09.16-8a	NR	Take over conversations with HP's staff members to follow-up on their well-being.	10.02.2021
2020.10.21-5b	NR	Set up a small group of members from both school forums to take forward work on the websites.	Post-federation
2020.10.21-5b	DB/clerk	Circulate new remote learning policy and post on website.	asap
2020.10.21-6e	NR	Finalise the 'new parent' survey with the suggested changes (TTG forum) and discuss with SLT.	Later in Spring term
2020.10.21-9	SG / RHR	Review existing safeguarding training courses and recommend training for governors.	10.02.2021
2020.10.21-10	JC	Discuss an outline plan for improving the school websites with HP.	Post-federation
2020.12.02-6b	DB	Provide recommendations for SLT pay progression.	Post-federation
2020.12.02-9	DB	Follow-up with the office manager at Rogate about GDPR.	asap
2021.01.20-6d	NR	Circulate draft surveys for governors to review – to be issued as part of the federation consultation period.	asap
2021.01.20-8	Clerk	Collate comments on any outstanding policies and send to NR.	10.02.2021
2021.01.20-11	Clerk	Follow-up with the chairs and HoS about postponing the forthcoming LSF meetings a couple of weeks.	asap

Annex A: Executive headteacher's report to governors

Headteacher's Report to Governors – January 2021

The beginning of this term has been like no other. Within the first week the advice from National and Local Government changed 4 times: fully open; fully closed; fully open to key workers; partially open to key workers! This has been exhausting and stressful for everyone involved – and I include parents and children in that.

I am astonished that by the end of the first week, every member of staff had communicated with their class and every child had work sent to them via Microsoft Teams. This incredible result is supported by the following facts:

- **In Rake, 100% of children had engaged in school work either in school or via Teams**
- **In Rogate, 100% of children had engaged in school work either in school, via Teams or, initially for a small minority, via packs sent home. All children are now working on-line.**
- **Rake currently has 26 key worker/vulnerable children in school (25%)**
- **Rogate has 14 key worker/vulnerable children in school (21%).** This is considerably lower than many schools and has been highlighted as a key to our success
- **Both schools are organised into 2 bubbles, one for Reception and KS1 children and one for KS2 children**
- **Staff are working on a rota basis both in school and working from home delivering support for their class**
- **All children have had maths and English work set and marked, some topic work and every teacher has set up on-line sessions to teach their classes and check on the welfare of the children in their care.**
- **Children and staff at Rogate have taken part in whole school acts of worship, led by Father Edward.**
- **Children at Rake will have the same opportunity next week led by Trish.**
- **We have had 11 additional IT devices donated following pleas in the parish magazines. Nine of these have been stripped down by our IT technician and sent out to children. There is now no need for staff to send paper copies of work out and all children can access on-line learning**
- **Staff commitment is high, despite their own anxieties**
- **At least three classes are planning together**
- **There is an excellent rapport between staff and their classes (and their pets!). I have now sat in on Teams calls from all staff – a hugely emotional experience. I am full of admiration and pride for all staff.**
- **Support staff are supporting our most vulnerable children by delivering 1:1 interventions via Teams**
- **The staff have been energised by the new challenges of this term**

All of this is set in the context of feedback from other Rother Valley schools, WSGA and the BBC, who in an article entitled 'What to Expect in Lockdown' wrote:

*'If your child's school already puts work online, via Google Classroom, for example, this will probably continue. But these sort of tools tend to be used more by **secondary schools** than primaries. So older pupils are more likely to be in the routine of checking their school's chosen platform and completing work.'*

Both Heads of School have worked tirelessly this term – Steph to support the most vulnerable of our families who are not in school and by setting up the on-line interventions for the support staff; Paul has been on call to fire fight the many issues parents have had with accessing Microsoft Teams.

There have been three complaints to me about the quality and quantity of work being set. This equates to 1.7% of the school. All issues have been resolved satisfactorily.

Staff, (34 including both cooks and cleaners), have all been given masks, visors and gloves to wear. There is a plentiful supply of hand wash and disinfectant spray. Every member of staff has a pack including a Covid-19 test, in case they become unwell. We have had two positive cases of Covid-19 within the staff, one in each school. There has been no spreading of the disease, which is an indication that the hygiene measures we have in place are effective.

The risk assessment has been updated **three times** this term to reflect the changing situation in the schools. The planned Health and Safety audit from West Sussex County Council at Rake has been postponed for a third time due to the lockdown.

Numbers of children on roll are currently **Rake: 104; Rogate: 68**. The daily attendance figures are sent to the Department for Education, an exercise which can take up to an hour. Rake has admitted a Looked After Child to Year 6. He has settled extremely well and has made some friends, despite the lockdown restrictions.

In Rogate, the majority of the children who are eligible for free school meals are in school every day and have a hot meal. In Rake, most parents have declined any offer of support. Jane has spent a great deal of time accessing the Endred free school meal site and from the beginning of this week **all** entitled families will be receiving supermarket vouchers. This, I feel, is a much better option than the 'hampers' of food offered by Chartwells.

Within Rake, Chartwells, offer the Steamplicity menu, whereas at Rogate the food is cooked centrally and sent in hot boxes. The quality of what is being offered in Rogate has diminished in this latest period of lockdown. Last Wednesday the usual roast dinner was replaced by fish and mashed potatoes, the same was on offer on Friday. One day the children were offered jacket potatoes (which are classed as emergency food). Today (Monday) the 'choice' was cheese omelette, chips and green beans. The salad was tinned sweetcorn. I have entered into email correspondence with Chartwells' area manager.

The **Phonic Check** results have been submitted to the Department for Education. In **Rake 93%** and **Rogate 91%** of the Year 2 children who should have been tested at the end of Year 1 met the required standard. This compares favourably with the national standard last year of **82%**.

The ceiling in the Rogate hall has been replaced and work to replace the oil tank and boiler will begin as soon as possible. If this is in term time then SSE will bring in heaters for the classrooms.