

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD
OF HEAVERS FARM AND SELSDON FEDERATION
HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2022 AT 6:15PM VIA ZOOM**

Present

Graham Cluer	Partnership Governor, Chair
Nigel Collins	Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair
Roisin Kumar	Co-opted Governor
Ayesha Marrett	Parent Governor
Susan Papas	Executive Head teacher
Jo Read	Associate Member
Hilary Smith	Associate Member
Alan Tigg	Co-opted Governor
Katie Walton	Parent Governor

Also In Attendance

Robert Askey (HoS, Heavers Farm)	Observer
Hugo Feitor (HoS, Selsdon)	Observer
Liz Parry	Governance Manager

Absent

Tanya Dennis	LA Appointed Governor
Lucy Freeston	Co-opted Governor

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Apologies for absence had been received from Tanya Dennis and Lucy Freeston which were accepted by the Governing Board.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests in the Current agenda

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Quorum

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

4. Update on Governing Body Membership:

- **To note that Graham's current term of office ends at the end of December and to recommend re-appointment for a further term of office**

The Governing Board formally approved Graham's re-appointment with unanimous agreement.

- **To note that Nigel's current term of office recently ended and to recommend re-appointment for a further term of office**

Nigel confirmed that he was happy to stand for a further term of office and the Governing Board formally confirmed his re-appointment with unanimous agreement.

- **To note that Jo's current term of office as an Associate Member recently ended and to recommend re-appointment for a further term of office**

The Governing Board formally confirmed the re-appointment of Jo for a further four year term of office as an Associate Member

- **Efforts to recruit to the three vacancies**

2 Parent Governors	Katie, Ayesha
Executive HT	Susan
1 staff Governor	vacancy
1 LA Governor	Tanya
2 Partnership Governors	Graham, vacancy
6 Co-opted Governors	Nigel, Alan, Lucy, Roisin. 2 vacancies
2 Associated Members:	Jo, Hilary
2 Observers:	Robert, Hugo

It was noted that a potential candidate had come forward via Governors For Schools, for one of the Co-opted vacancies. The Executive Headteacher said that she will be contacting the candidate to arrange a visit and discussion as soon as possible.

The EHT said that she will arrange a Staff Governor election as soon as possible.

The Chair said that he would contact Governors for Schools again to ask for assistance in finding candidates for the other two vacancies, noting that no other routes for finding candidates had as yet been successful.

ACTION: Update on progress with recruitment to vacancies to be reported at the next meeting.

5. Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body held on 22nd September 2022 *Checking of accuracy and signing by the Chair*

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate account of proceedings. The Chair would sign a copy for the school files when next in school.

6. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes of 22nd September 2022 not included on the current agenda

- **Confirmation that all governors had read Keeping Children Safe in Education:** It was noted that all governors have confirmed their reading of KCSIE (absent governors at the last meeting had

confirmed with the Governance Manager via email)

➤ **Mental Health and Wellbeing Governor.** It was noted that at the last meeting the Governing Board delegated this role to the Quality of Education Committee. Subsequently Tanya Dennis had indicated her willingness to take on the role, and this was fully endorsed with unanimous agreement and thanks from the Governing Board.

➤ **Costings for planned residential trips this year**

The EHT confirmed that bookings for the Year 6 trips to PGL Marchant's Hill had been made for July 2023 as authorised by governors at the previous meeting. The figures for the trip were all costed and included within the budget figures for both schools. However, there was a £23,000 shortfall (ie the Federation was subsidizing the costs of the trips to this amount). It was noted that prices had risen considerably and it was not feasible to pass these on to all families. A number of options are being followed up to try and reduce costs to the school, as follows:

- Writing to ask families if they could afford to pay any more towards the costs
- Fundraising in school
- Reducing costs for children's bedding which is charged at £15 a head by asking children to bring their own bedding if available

Alan Tigg suggested it may be worthwhile approaching the Rotary Club to ask if they could offer some help with funding of the trip, and also scout groups to ask if they have any capacity to offer loan of sleeping bags etc.

ACTION: EHT to report back on actions and progress with making up the shortfall at the next GB meeting.

➤ **Plans/arrangements for Safeguarding training for the whole GB**

It was confirmed that the following governors had received a full session of Safeguarding training at the recent Governors' Day in school, delivered by Rachel Evans: Graham, Katie, Ayesha, Tanya. Alan had missed the first section

ACTION: Any governors who have not yet completed the full Safeguarding training to complete training at the next Governors' Day in School at Selsdon on Thursday 23rd February 2023

7. Committee Items

To receive the minutes of this term's meetings and the reviewed Terms of Reference, recommended for formal approval

The Governing Board **formally approved** the reviewed TORs for both Committees

7.1 Resources Committee - meeting held on 19th October 2022

- **Financial management, including update on outcomes of meetings with the LA**

There had been a meeting with the LA the previous week to discuss the budget positions for both schools, also attended by the Chair. The EHT reported that the current position with the budgets was significantly worse than the status at the time of the last GB meeting. Currently Heavers

Farm was showing a deficit position of £250,000 and Selsdon was showing a deficit of £130,000. At Selsdon a major contributor to this was the unfunded pay awards for teachers and support staff. At this stage there is not a clear idea about funding for the next financial year; the Government has announced a funding increase for schools but how this will be distributed to and by local authorities is not yet known.

At Heavers Farm as well as the impact of unfunded pay awards the EHT has also uncovered that the school is making a significant loss on catering following a detailed analysis of the budget, with a loss of £1 per meal which is totally unsustainable. This equates to about £100,000 loss over a year.

ACTION: Update on plans to address the losses in catering at the next meeting of Resources Committee and the full Governing Board.

- **Monthly meetings with Finance governor**

It was agreed that Alan and the EHT will liaise to set up monthly zoom calls to discuss the finance position for both schools/look at current outturns etc.

- **Write off - presentation of records for formal ratification**

Nigel said that he was waiting from Asset/Write Off lists from each of the schools to present to the Governing Board.

ACTION: EHT to follow up with each of the schools. Agenda item at the next meeting of Resources Committee, and formal ratification at the next meeting of the full Governing Board.

7.2 Quality of Education Committee -meeting held on 9th November 2022

There were no updates on the minutes of the meeting of 9th November.

The EHT asked governors to note that on Friday 9th December the Federation had to close Selsdon for a day due to a blockage in the drains which caused an overflow of sewerage in the grounds. A specialist company had to be brought in to undertake clearance and disinfection of the site.

8. Update on recent audit held at Heavers Farm

The school had not yet received a report following the recent audit. During feedback following the audit the following points had been raised by the auditor:

Governance and Leadership

- Finance policy and procedures 2021 - not agreed by FGB – ACTIONED
- Whistleblowing policy - not agreed by FGB – ACTIONED
- Pay Policy - not agreed by FGB – ACTIONED
- SFVS says FGB should review budget reports 6 x year
- Budget submitted on 3 May 2022 (*because 1 May was Saturday*)
- Skills matrix: more work to be done on understanding financial requirements on schools
- Approval of contracts - to be reported to Resources Committee and approved by the full GB - ACTIONED for next committee agenda

Safeguarding

- Update blog to show who the safeguarding governor is - still showing Graham – ACTIONED to

show Ayesha

Information Governance

- Information asset register. Should include what data used for, how long it is kept and how it is stored/protected.
- Equipment loans: period of loan not specified on the form. Add to the form. Add into ICT audit report.

Health and Safety

- Fire log book - not available, but has now been ACTIONED

As noted above all the points raised had either been fully addressed or were in the process of being addressed.

ACTION: Audit report to be circulated to governors when it has been received.

Resources Committee to include an agenda item for follow up on any outstanding audit action points including review of contracts due to expire.

9. Policy Review

APPROVED BY QoE COMMITTEE

For ratification by FGB

- **Anti-Bullying Policy** (no change, only date)
- **Collective Worship Policy** (*no change, only date*)
- **SEND Policy for Selsdon** (*no change, only date and name of SENCO*)
- **SEND Policy for Heavers Farm** (*no change, only date*)
- **Handwriting Policy** (*some parts extracted as no longer relevant, date change*)
- **Staff Wellbeing Policy** (*new, taken from The Key*)

APPROVED BY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

For ratification by FGB

- **Lettings Policy** (no change, only date)
- **Charging and Remissions Policy** (*no change, only date*)
- **Health and Safety Policy** (*no change, only date*)
- **Governors' Allowance Policy** (*no change, only date*)
- **Uniform Policies** (new this year)

POLICIES WHICH HAVE NOT GONE THROUGH THE COMMITTEES

- **Positive Handling Policy:** New this year. In line with revised good practice advice.
- **Behaviour Policy:** *This has one small change made in response to teacher feedback. Text in red.*
- **Fire Safety Policies:** *No changes other than date. Need to be ratified for this year.*
- **Fire Safety Strategy:** *This has one alteration to keep it in line with our fire risk assessment. Text in red.*
- **Attendance and Punctuality Policy.** *These changes are being proposed by the Attendance*

Officers and EWO, to reflect current practice and legislation. Text in red.

- **Whistleblowing Policy 2022.** *These need to be approved for this year. No significant changes. Provided as part of the SLA with Croydon..*
- **Pay Policies:** *These were updated by Croydon in November 2022, and have been approved by the unions. The EHT has also removed any reference using data to measure performance in line with recent union and DfE advice.*

Q: Uniform Policy: Were the potential concerns about costs followed up?

A: Yes, we looked at what we request, and we do keep costs to a minimum for parents. The only compulsory elements are a jumper and tie. We also provide lots of nearly new and used uniform.

Some typos/minor amendments were noted for some policies:

Lettings: Need to amend to include the fact that the school is also a non vaping school and also to remove reference to smoking area.

Fire Safety: Remove the name of the former Site Manager as he is no longer employed

With these changes noted the Governing Board formally approved the reviewed policies with unanimous agreement.

Q: Behaviour Policy: Are we comfortable that a complaint raised by a former parent about use of detentions causing children to be anxious and worried is not the general experience of children in the Federation, and that the Behaviour Policy is being applied properly across both schools?

A: The EHT said that this is not something she recognises. Both schools are calm, relaxed and sociable, and these are not places where children are cowering and worried. The EHT said she was very clear the Behaviour Policy was being applied appropriately.

The Federation was still in the process too of applying for National Autistic Society accreditation.

10. Safeguarding Update

➤ **Completion of the annual Safeguarding Audits for both schools this term**

Governors were in receipt of the completed safeguarding audits for their information.

Ayesha reported that she has spoken to both schools' Safeguarding leads and is very confident that Hugo and Rachel work in a similar fashion and that Safeguarding practices are working well across both sites. Ayesha will be arranging to meet with both individually in the new year to look in more detail at Safeguarding arrangements.

ACTION: Update on Safeguarding to be an agenda item at the GB meeting of 30th March 2023

➤ **Any Safeguarding issues arising**

None

Q: Do we have a policy concerning searches of children?

A: No, at present we don't have a Search Policy but this is something we will look at and bring to

	<p>the Spring Term meeting of the GB</p> <p>ACTION: EHT to look at developing a Search Policy to be presented at the GB meeting of 30th March</p> <p>Q: In the Safeguarding Policy there is mention of Gangs training at HF but this is not mentioned in the Selsdon Policy. Should it be in both?</p> <p>A: Yes, we do need to ensure that Gangs training takes place in both schools as it is equally relevant. Currently the school is in contact with an organisation Big Foot Arts Education and working to develop a pilot project on gangs awareness for primary schools, with a view to rolling out a programme.</p> <p>ACTION: Update on development Big Foot Gangs awareness training to be reported at the GB meeting of 30th March 2023</p> <p>➤ Governors' check of the Single Central Records</p> <p>It was agreed that Graham and Ayesha will liaise to arrange SCR checks with Rachel and Hugo early in the new year. Update to be reported at the GB meeting of 30th March 2023.</p>
11.	<p>Feedback from recent Governors' Day in school at Heavers Farm</p> <p>Governors who were able to visit the school on Governors' Day reported that the atmosphere in school as always had been calm, happy and purposeful. Children were confident and polite, and discussions with staff were positive. Some TAs had indicated their concerns about the current financial position and whether this could result in redundancies.</p> <p>During the visit governors had noticed that a number of rooms were empty. The Deputy EHT explained that on the date of the visit a number of classes would have been having PE so their rooms would have been empty at that time. The EHT said that thought has been given to planning for use of rooms, and it is only on the top of the Hilary Smith building that there are empty classrooms at the present time. A question was raised about how many non qualified teachers are in charge of classes?</p> <p>The EHT said that there are some trainee teachers in post. Robert said that there had been a vacancy in Year 4 and a TA had been acting up, but the school has now recruited a teacher. Ayesha said that as a parent she had been aware that a class had been without a teacher for a term, and that the TA taking the class was very good .</p>
12	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>Governors were in receipt of the detailed HT Report which included a lot of data. The EHT invited any questions:</p> <p>Staff Absence: Q Is it still the case that covid related absences do not count towards the sickness record which should be taken into account for reaching trigger points?</p> <p>A: Yes, that is our understanding, following Union and LA advice.</p> <p>Pupil Suspensions: Q: If a child is suspended after your HT report was written will it be included in figures reported to governors?</p> <p>A: Yes, they will be entered onto the excel spread sheet and reported at the next GB meeting.</p>

It was noted that this term there had been 1 suspension at Selsdon and several at Heavers Farm some of which related to the same children.

Social Services/Early help: Governors registered concern that Social Services views of when Early Help is appropriate differs so widely from the Federation's. The EHT said that there is a constant tension between schools and social services which largely arise because of lack of resources with Croydon Social Services. Hugo explained the ways in which the schools follow all procedures with care and dedication to ensure that any children's needs are lodged and responded to as much as possible.

The schools will also refer to the school's Link Advisor Joyce Lydford in certain instances.

Year 3 classes merging: The EHT reminded governors of the fact that a Year 3 teacher was leaving Heavers Farm, and therefore a decision had been taken to merge two Year 3 classes. Some parents had been initially upset but having heard the rationale and the provision which will be in place all have decided to stay with the school. The class will be staffed by a teacher and a very experienced TA who is an unqualified teacher, so there will be two people delivering quality first teaching. At this stage the number of children is likely to be 38. The SLT are confident that the children will have a good deal. The Chair asked governors for their formal agreement, noting that previously governors had agreed to a class size maximum limit of 35. Governors discussed the issue and agreed that with the quality of the provision **they could support the proposal.**

Pupil Numbers: Governors noted the very detailed analysis of pupil numbers, looking at the numbers of children moving to local schools and those leaving to move out of borough. It was also particularly noted that far fewer pupils are entering at Reception than the numbers leaving at the end of Year 6. In terms of general mobility the figures indicated that there is currently not a particular exodus of children moving to other local schools, and the Federation is receiving children from other local schools. Governors agreed that this was very helpful and were keen to ensure that they follow pupil mobility in detail on a termly basis.

Hilary reported that she had attended an open day with her daughter and had been very impressed with the school and the children, with a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. Hilary wondered if there might be any scope for The EHT/Heads of school to address visiting parents en masse to really sell the schools and enthuse potential applicants. The EHT said that the approach of the schools was to have lots of days/opportunities for prospective parents to visit, and they were as flexible as possible to fit in with parents' ability to attend visits. Members of senior staff are always on hand to answer questions and lead the tours etc. However, the EHT said that she would look at this to see if there might be any mileage in having a meeting to address families on at least some open days.

Recently the Federation had hosted a meeting at Heavers Farm for other local schools in the cluster to look at the issue of pupil numbers and what is in place in Croydon. What has become clear is that HF receives a higher number of applications than other local schools in total, but there is a need to convert more of these into first choice applications.

Q: Do you have exit surveys for families to complete if they move their children from the Federation?

A: Yes, we have just introduced this. A summary of findings and responses from the exit surveys will be

	<p>included in future Headteacher's Reports.</p> <p>ACTION: EHT to include a summary of exit surveys completed by parents who move their children from Selsdon or Heavers Farm.</p> <p>Pupil Attendance: It was noted that the attendance figures at Selsdon were showing improvement and were in line with the national average. Attendance figures at Heavers Farm were still below national average. A lot of work is being done to support improved attendance and the Educational Welfare Officer has reassured the school that the Attendance Officer's processes and work is proactive and rigorous.</p> <p>Q: Do we still offer incentives with end of term prizes of bikes for attendance, and if so does this cause any ill feeling if children have conditions or illness which prevent their full attendance?</p> <p>A: We haven't been giving out prizes through Covid and are re-thinking our approach. We do have weekly celebration assemblies.</p>
13	<p>Formal Ratification of the School Development Plans and any updates on progress made this term</p> <p>The Governing Board formally ratified the School Development Plans for both schools. The EHT said that she would be updating progress against targets for the next meeting. Governors noted that Maths was one of the key priority areas for this year's SDPs. The EHT said that the recent publication of national data for the multiplication tests had confirmed that both schools had done well against the national average in the first year of these tests.</p> <p>Q: Are you confident that Maths results for end of KS2 will be better than last year?</p> <p>A: Yes, we are putting in a lot of work and we are confident of improvements.</p> <p>ACTION: Update on reviewed SDPs to be reported at the next meeting of the full GB. Progress against targets to be discussed at the next meeting of the Quality of Education Committee on 1st March 2023.</p>
14.	<p>Governors' Focus Roles: Any updates on visits and contacts, and reports of visit</p> <p>Some governors had met with their focus role counterparts in school during the Governors' Day in school.</p> <p>The Chair urged governors to make sure that they do undertake visits next term and provide a short write up afterwards/feedback to the Governing Board.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to ensure that they pursue their focus roles and report back.</p>
15	<p>Governors' Training - any updates</p> <p>Graham reported that he had undertaken training on Independent Appeals panels. This had been very useful in identifying all the elements which should be included before a case goes to appeal.</p> <p>The Chair urged governors to take advantage of the Octavo governance training programme which is still mostly online at the current time.</p>
16.	<p>Chair's Items and actions/Correspondence</p> <p>None</p>

17.	Confidential Items There was one item of a confidential nature, recorded under part B
18.	Next meeting dates:

Spring Term 2023	
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Thursday 2nd February 6.15pm	Resources Committee
Thursday 23rd February 9am Selsdon	Governors' Day in School
Wednesday 1st March 6.15pm	Quality of Education Committee
Thursday 30th March 6.15pm	Full Governing Board

Summer Term 2023	
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Tuesday 25th April 6.15pm	Budget Ratification Governing Board meeting
Wednesday 24th May 6.15pm	Quality of Education Committee
Tuesday 6th June 6.15pm	Resources Committee
Tuesday 11th July 6.15pm	Full Governing Board

Signed.....Chair of the Governing Board

Date.....