

The Genesis Federation



Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board

Date and Time: Thursday, 4 December 2025, 17:00-19:00
 Location: Beckley CE School
 Governors Present: Andrew Button (AB), Peter Challans (PC),
 Eloise Donaghay-Spire (EDS), Rose Durban (RD), Vicky Dyer (VD),
 Emma Herbert (EH), Chrissie Johnston (CJ), Kirsty Parsons (KP),
 Paul Redstone (PR), Lison Smart (LS), Simon Thurston (ST).
 Quorum: 8 (50% of the FGB in post)
 Attending: Fay Churchill (FC)
 Clerk: Sue Redstone
 Apologies: Andy Davy (AD), Colin Barling (CB), Jeff Clements (JC).
 Absent:

	Discussion	Action
1.	<u>Welcome and Opening Prayer</u> - RD welcomed everyone to the meeting at 17:00. Apologies were received and accepted from AD, CB, JC. - ST led the opening prayer.	
2.	<u>Declaration of Business Interests</u> - There were no new declarations of business interests.	
3.	<u>Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising</u> - The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted. <u>Actions</u> 1. Complete Safeguarding for Governance training. There has been an issue with GovernorHub recording one of the courses. This has been completed by all Governors. 2. Arrange meeting with CB, VD and CJ to discuss next steps regarding the websites. A meeting was held and the team agreed to bring this together with the strategic piece. 3. Confirm a date for Therapeutic Thinking training, either before December FGB or separate session. Held 13/11/25. - Governor Question: How is it implemented operationally? How can we evidence the impact of the approach? - Approaches may differ in each school and depends on the context for individuals. - Peasmarsh have seen a lower rate of exclusion. Action: Arrange a further discussion session on Therapeutic Thinking. 4. Provide comments on Section 5 of the Small and Rural Schools Statement. Feedback was received.	Closed Closed Closed Clerk Closed

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	5. Share notes from the Small Schools visit by ESCC with the board. This was distributed on 12/11/25. 6. Add item to December agenda to follow up on key themes from strategic planning day. Agenda Item 6. Action: Share SDPs on GovernorHub.	Closed Closed FC/LS/ST
4.	<u>Board Membership Matters</u> - Retirement of Rev Liz Varley 4/10/25. The board recognised Rev Liz's significant contribution to the schools. Action: Ensure the Diocese are aware of the needs of Beckley and Peasmarsh. - Response times to Governor emails. The board highlighted that sometimes it can be tricky to get email responses, which can impact governor visits.	Clerk
5.	<u>Chair's Action and Updates</u> - <u>Headteacher Performance Management</u> (HTPM) has been carried out with the Diocese for Beckley and Peasmarsh. In future, this should be scheduled for earlier in the term. - <u>Small and Rural Schools</u>: A further meeting is scheduled for 20/1/26. W/c 8/12/24 the LA are holding similar conversations. - <u>Complaints</u>: The board discussed the increase in the number of complaints across the schools. - There are more children with complex needs and complex family situations. Issues are being raised daily. By the time it becomes a complaint, the school have often exhausted all the tools. - It was felt that the process is not working, but also most parents do not follow the process, with issues being sent straight to the Chair of Governors. Action: Consider how the process could be improved and whether there could be a "listening" governor. - Governor Services are running a MHEW session Wednesday 10 December, 18:00-19:30, focusing on parent and carer engagement. - PR informed the board that he is stepping down as SEND Link Governor, due to other commitments. The Chair asked the board to consider how we could meet the need for a SEND Link Governor. - The Chair reported that the Government had recently shared a strategy approach on SEND. There is likely to be a soft launch of the strategy to be released around Easter. Action: Distribute the Government strategy approach on SEND.	Chair / Clerk Clerk

6.	<u>Strategy</u> - <u>Strategy Paper:</u> The board discussed the draft strategy document and agreed that it needs more clarity. The impact time has shortened. A further away day will be held early in 2026. - <u>Finance:</u> Finance Committee (plus JC and RD) have looked at how to make the Federation efficient and sustainable, considering what would a blank sheet look like and how we could get there, together with the leadership structure and structure underneath. - <u>Governor Question:</u> How can we define a target operating model until we have a strategic model? - We have to start at a point in time, we can't afford to wait. The Finance Committee have been looking at all roles, however there are some priorities: Beckley and St Michael's currently have insufficient bursar support. There is an imminent decision required around the number of classes. - The board recognised the careful stewardship of the budget that each of the schools has operated. - Implementing a 3-class structure has several operational difficulties, as a 3-year group class crosses a Key Stage. It is likely that some parents will find this less appealing and choose an alternative school, which will further impact the number on roll. - Financial Position: - o Peasmarch: Approximately £40k up against budget, due to KS1 grant. Therefore, the school may not be in deficit end of next year. - o Beckley: Currently £20k ahead of budget. - o St Michael's: Currently behind budget. Currently looking at any savings. Didn't get the KS1 top up grant. Schools need 30 pupils or more in KS1 to be eligible for the top up grant. Neither Peasmarch nor St Michael's will be eligible for the top up funding next year. - <u>Marketing:</u> List of ideas has been sent out, with some ideas already adopted. - Parent surveys may be a good way to capture early issues before they become complaints. The suggestion is that one should be carried out before Christmas and a second during the summer term. The board thanked KP for all her work on the marketing. - <u>Official use of social media:</u> the board discussed concerns about the use and role modelling to the children. The board discussed whether the schools are teaching the children that is good to be on social media. - The schools recognise the need to engage with the community and showcase the children's learning. Newsletters are full of pictures of children; Facebook simply provides another platform. The schools considered they are modelling in an appropriate way. - 65% of people who have looked at posts are not parents. - The website is the official channel, which needs to be clear and up to date.	
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7.	<u>Finance</u> - Covered under Item 6.	
8.	<u>Link Governor Reports:</u> Reports distributed since the last meeting: - Q of E: Science monitoring at Peasmarsh - Q of E: Term 6 Progress & Attainment Data monitoring for all three schools - Q of E: Science monitoring at St Michael's - Ethos: Collective worship monitoring at Peasmarsh and St Michael's - MHEW: St Michael's Update from each Governor on visits/planned visits, with focus on impact and difference. - MHWB: met with HTs at Beckley and Peasmarsh. Dates to be agreed for next visit. - SEND: Universal provision isn't visible but may be meeting the need. Ethos: The team are continuing to go into schools, so that children recognise governors. - Governor Question: How was the charity chosen as a Federation? - The need was identified as part of the SIAMS Inspection. The charity was known to a family contact. The school arranged for a visit from the charity Schools Linking Co-ordinator. - Quality of Education: The team have planned to look at the data for previous term in every long term. Decision: The FGB approved the Q of E Annual Monitoring Plan. - Health and Safety: Audits conducted at all 3 schools over spring/summer term. Some minor actions.	
9.	<u>Leadership Reports</u> - St Michael's: Clarified the numbers: should be 9 out and 5 in. - Governor Question: Regarding the leavers since September, is there a trend? - Peasmarsh: 2 families of siblings who moved locally. Due to SEND provision. - St Michael's: similar. - Governor Question: How does the Persistent Absence (PA) compare? - Peasmarsh: SEND absence is higher than other similar schools, but not significantly. High PA is due to family holidays, generally one week. - St Michael's: High PA for Pupil Premium and SEND due to a 2.5-week holiday. Also, impacted by children on part-time timetables. - The board highlighted that this is likely to impact progress when reviewing Q of E. - The board discussed the merits of Breakfast and After School Clubs (ASC). Beckley are looking at increasing the ASC offering to include Thursdays and Fridays. Breakfast club is often a deciding factor for parents and can provide a slow start for children who might find the school gate overwhelming.	

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	- Governor Question: What are the numbers of first choices? - Beckley: 7 first choices. - Peasmarsch: 3 first choices. - St Michael's: 2 first choices. - Governor Question: Are there likely to be any increases in the PAN of local schools? - More likely to be reducing.															
10.	<u>AOB</u> - The board highlighted that there are several policies in need of updating.															
11.	<u>Date of Next Meeting</u> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Date</th><th>Event</th><th>Location</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Thu 19 Mar 2026</td><td>FGB</td><td>St Michael's CE School</td></tr></tbody></table> The meeting closed at 19:10.	Date	Event	Location	Thu 19 Mar 2026	FGB	St Michael's CE School									
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