



**The Viridis Federation of  
Orchard, Southwold and Hoxton Garden Primary Schools  
Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting**

Held at 6pm on 8 February 2024 at Orchard Primary School

<b>Governor</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Term End</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
James Gowland (JG)	Co-opted Governor and Chair	08/26 (T2)	Y	2/3
Laura Theobald (LT)	Co-opted Governor and Vice Chair	08/23 (T1)	Y	2/3
Victoria Crawford (VC)	Co-opted Governor	08/25 (T2)	Y	2/3
Hannah Lownsbrough (HL)	Co-opted Governor	08/26 (T2)	Y	1/3
Lenna Marson (LM)	Co-opted Governor	08/25 (T2)	Y	2/3
Chisara Nwabara (CN)	Co-opted Governor	08/25 (T1)	Y	2/3
Samson Brough (SB)	Co-opted Governor	08/26 (T1)	N	1/3
Alberta Senyah (AS)	Co-opted Governor	08/25 (T1)	Y	1/3
Cllr Ian Rathbone (IR)	Local Authority (LA) Governor	08/26 (T2)	N	1/3
Aya Haidar (AH)	Parent Governor	08/25 (T1)	Y	2/3
Kay Richardson (KR)	Parent Governor	08/24 (T2)	Y	2/3
Claudia Moreira (CM)	Staff Governor	08/24 (T2)	Y	2/3
Rachel Davie (RD)	Executive Headteacher	n/a	Y	2/3
Tolu Ojo-Williams (TOW)	Governor		Y	1/2
<b>Others in attendance</b>				
Stephen O'Brien (SOB)	Headteacher, Orchard School	n/a	Y	2/3
Rachael Carr (RC)	Acting Headteacher, Southwold School	n/a	Y	2/3
Rachel Kinder (RK)	Headteacher, Hoxton Garden School	n/a	Y	2/3
<b>Clerk</b>				
Simon Bravery	Hackney Education	n/a		

Governor attendance at this meeting	86%	
Governor attendance year to date	82%	

### **Actions Log**

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
18/05/2023	9.1.8	RD to share the wellbeing policy with governors.  <i>This is being updated and will be shared in due course.</i>	RD	Pending
18/05/2023	9.2.14	SB to share GDPR report with governors.	SB	Pending
05/10/2023	5.4	RD to discuss making a video with the communications team.  <i>This has been done.</i>	RD	Pending
05/10/2023	8.6	Governors to share all training attended with RD.  <i>This is an ongoing request to all governors.</i>	Governors	Pending
05/10/2023	8.8	RD to share safeguarding training dates with governors.  <i>Two dates have been shared and a third session can be arranged if these are not convenient. All governors need to refresh their training if they have not done so recently, although safeguarding is included in induction training for new governors.</i>	RD	Pending

### **PART ONE: Non-Confidential – Main Business**

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome, Apologies and Consent for Absence</b>
1.1	The Chair welcomed all to this meeting of the Full Governing Body.
1.2	Apologies were received from SB and IR.
1.3	The meeting was confirmed as quorate.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Governing Body Organisation</b>
2.1	<a href="#">Membership</a>
2.1.1	TOW was welcomed to her first meeting.

	Caroline English (Orchard) and Justina Browne (Hoxton Garden) have joined as associate governors.
2.2	<a href="#">Viridis Terms of Reference</a>
2.2.1	No changes were noted to Viridis Terms of Reference since the last meeting.
2.3	<a href="#">Viridis Register of Business Interests</a>
2.3.1	It was noted that there were no declarations of interest but TOW to share with RD information for the form. <b>ACTION: TOW TO SHARE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST WITH RD</b>
2.4	<a href="#">Code of Conduct</a>
2.4.1	The code of conduct was noted.
2.5	<a href="#">Governing Body Annual Calendar 2023/24</a>
2.5.1	The governing body annual calendar was noted.
2.5.2	A Governor Visit to Orchard are scheduled for 26 April. Governors are asked to give notice of their intention to attend.
2.5.3	Three governors attended the recent visit to Hoxton Garden.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Agreement of minutes from the last meeting and any actions arising</b>
3.1	There were no comments on the <a href="#">minutes of the last meeting of 5 October 2023</a> , which governors APPROVED as an accurate record.
3.2	The following actions arising were noted:  SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health) is to be added to the glossary.  <b>ACTION: SEMH TO BE ADDED TO GLOSSARY</b>
3.3	Updates on other actions are noted on the action log at the top of the minutes.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>National and Local context update - RD</b>
4.1	RD highlighted that:  Southwold and Hoxton Garden are in the OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) inspection window, both having been last inspected in 2019. Inspections may take place very close together or even simultaneously.  OFSTED stopped inspections to give mental health training to inspectors. They started again on 22 January. There may be a slight delay but they will probably catch up.  There were 24 inspections in Hackney last year and there have been 16 so far this year. 97% of Hackney schools were rated good or outstanding at their last inspection.

	<p>Various aspects of school life will be considered in preparation for the inspection. Safeguarding is always a priority as a poor rating for this will result in a poor rating overall. Adaptation of the curriculum for children with differing levels of ability is also a focus.</p> <p>IDSR (Inspection Data Summary Report) data dashboards will be considered in the committees.</p> <p>RD will offer OFSTED training online after the safeguarding training, and prepare notes to help governors. A document on the questions asked at the last inspection will be shared.</p> <p><b>ACTION: RD TO ARRANGE OFSTED TRAINING AND SHARE NOTES AND PREVIOUS OFSTED QUESTIONS</b></p> <p>Hoxton Garden has been receiving pupils from a nearby school which is closing as part of the school estates strategy. Some arrived after the census which means that the school will not automatically receive funding for them in the next school year.</p> <p>Funding generally is challenging for Hackney schools. It is forecast that there will be a 70% reduction in financial reserves in the next two years and 65% of schools will be in deficit.</p> <p>There will be 95 fewer Reception pupils in the borough than forecast, although the forecast had been for a substantial reduction.</p> <p>DfE (Department for Education) guidance is that a maximum of 10% surplus places is reasonable. Current predictions are that there may be 240 more Reception places in Hackney than needed even after the closures and mergers already announced. This is based on projections for five years ahead by the GLA (Greater London Authority). The reduction in numbers affects many parts of London, not just Hackney.</p> <p>The federation shares a budget which will help to manage the influx into Hoxton Garden. There will also be an application for additional funding to the council as there is an increase of more than 7% on roll. The additional funding will not be received until next year. There will also be a payment of £1,000 per pupil with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) transferring to the school.</p> <p>There is still an acting Director of Education for Hackney. A new Mayor, Caroline Woodley, was elected on November 9. The Director of Children’s Services has returned to work following a period of bereavement.</p> <p>Some years ago governors examined the advantages and disadvantages of academisation. It may be worth revisiting the options for the future of the federation and the Executive Headteacher will share relevant materials with governors. The subject can then be discussed in small groups at the next Full Governing Body meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION: MATERIALS EXAMINING OPTIONS FOR THE SCHOOLS’ FUTURE TO BE CIRCULATED AND SUBJECT TO BE ON THE AGENDA OF NEXT FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING.</b></p>
4.3.1	<p><u>Question: Three days per week of wraparound care may not be enough. Can more staff be recruited to increase the offer?</u></p>

	<p>Answer: Staffing can be a challenge and could be a factor in how many days a school can reasonably offer. Some schools do not yet provide wraparound care at all which is the focus of the Government funding allocation.</p>
4.3.2	<p><u>Question: Will the closure of some schools have an effect on take-up for wraparound care?</u>  Answer: There has been more interest especially for Breakfast Club at Hoxton Garden as the pupil roll has increased.</p>
4.3.3	<p><u>Question: Does OFSTED inspect wraparound care?</u>  Answer: Yes, it does assess the quality of wraparound care. The Federation has strong and long standing provision and is confident that it will be rated well.</p>
4.3.4	<p><u>Question: It has been mentioned that wraparound care is not as good at Southwold as at the other schools. Is this true?</u>  Answer: All schools have a comparable offer. Hoxton Garden has fewer working parents and so there is less take-up. Wraparound care continues to be a priority as part of our wider curriculum offer. Discussion across parent groups is not substantiated in data or local survey feedback. This was a parent governor comment in the Autumn Term meeting. The Federation do not agree there is less quality provision in one school when compared to the others.</p>
4.3.5	<p><u>Question: How many staff are needed to provide wraparound care?</u>  Answer: It depends on numbers of children and ages. It is difficult to find staff willing to stay until 6.00 PM as many have children of their own and careful mapping, planning and quality assurance is in place to support this.</p>
4.3.6	<p><u>Question: What are the arrangements for Free School Meals (FSM)?</u>  Answer: The Mayor's offer has been extended for the next school year. It is not clear how long it will last after that or what the impact will be if/when it is withdrawn.</p>
4.3.7	<p><u>Question: Would a school which was being considered for closure join a federation?</u>  Answer: In the current context of falling rolls, this is now less likely. A federation would have to carefully consider supporting a school which had falling roll, budget challenge and may be in scope for closure.</p>
4.3.1	<p><u>Question: What will happen to the staff in schools that close?</u>  Answer: Vacancies in other Hackney schools will be advertised to them before they are advertised nationally. There will be redundancy packages available.</p>
4.3.2	<p><u>Question: Will Federation schools be under pressure to take on staff from closing schools?</u>  Answer: They will be assessed in the same way as any other candidate if they apply. They will not be offered a post simply because they are from a closing Hackney school.</p>
4.3.3	<p><u>Question: What will happen to the buildings?</u>  Answer: The buildings must be used for a community purpose. It is expected that numbers of primary school age children will plateau about 2028. The Mayor of London has warned against disposing of the buildings in case there is an increase in numbers requiring more schools to be opened.</p>
4.3.4	<p><u>Question: Is there a timeframe for academisation?</u></p>

	<p>Answer: No, this is simply an opportunity without time pressure to consider the options. If a decision does have to be made, then governors will have the relevant information.</p>
<p><b>5.0</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Executive Headteacher's Report (Spring Term 2024)</a> - RD</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>RD highlighted the following points:</p> <p>Year 6 is on track to exceed the national average in assessment outcomes.</p> <p>Assessments take place in December and June in reading, writing and Maths. Broadly, 75% of all pupils in all years are reaching the required standard. Results are moderated. Children requiring additional support have been identified.</p> <p>Attendance is a priority. The Federation is working with the Hackney Attendance Service which is holding surgeries and identifying barriers to attendance. There is also a focus on punctuality.</p> <p>A Music teacher at Southwold is leaving at the end of term. Another teacher will move into the role. As with MFL (Modern Foreign Languages), two teachers teach music across the Federation.</p> <p>Music is a strong feature of the offer. One Pupil at Orchard has won an award of two terms of music lessons being paid for.</p> <p>The Communications Manager has left. The vacancy has been advertised but it may be a while before the post is filled</p> <p>The Deputy Headteacher at Orchard will go on maternity leave shortly. Interim arrangements will be in place until another senior leader returns at the end of the term.</p> <p>Orchard roll is stable with 87% capacity. The number of first choices for Reception places at the school in September is likely to be about the same as this year at about 60.</p> <p>One option would be to have a temporary PAN (Published Admission Number) of 60 for September, recognising that three classes will not be viable. No three form entry school in Hackney is full. There could be a consideration of permanent reduction in the PAN in future years.</p> <p>Southwold is at 81% capacity, with 45 choosing is as their first choice for Reception in September.</p> <p>Hoxton Garden was at 83% capacity in the Autumn term. This has risen to 88% now with children from a nearby closing school joining.</p> <p>There are so far just over 30 first choices for Reception at Hoxton Garden, which is lower than last year. There may be a temporary reduction in PAN, depending on the final figures. The offers will be made in May and so decision is likley in this timeframe.</p> <p>The Nurseries have increased in the course of the year to 56% capacity from 38% capacity.</p>

	<p>RD is now a member of the Estates Strategy Advisory Board. It has its first meeting this afternoon.</p> <p>There is a weekly staff development programme. The federation offers borough-wide leadership training. Middle leaders are following a specific programme. Details of core professional development have been shared within the report circulated before the meeting.</p> <p>RD and SOB will be taking part in a visit to Vancouver during the Easter holidays. Teachers from Vancouver will visit Hackney in March.</p> <p>An OFSTED research visit for Art and Design took place at Southwold in November.</p> <p>Action Research projects have been undertaken and the books produced were available at the meeting for governors to inspect.</p> <p>Parent surveys have been conducted. The results have been considered in sub committees.</p> <p>At Southwold a window survey has taken place. Some windows need replacing and work is taking place on the façade. There is scaffolding in place which has led to some changes to entering and leaving the building. There was some delay in this work whilst funding was arranged but the work is now being undertaken in line with the expected timeline.</p> <p>There has been some water ingress at Orchard in a lift shaft which has caused damage. The council has provided financial support, but it has proved difficult to establish who is contractually liable. Play structures will be removed with most of the work taking place at half term.</p> <p>Fire drills have taken place at all three schools.</p> <p>No problems with health and safety have been identified.</p> <p>The SCR (Single Central Record) has been checked by the Hackney Human Resources Team.</p>
5.2	<p><u>Question: How long can a temporary PAN last?</u></p> <p>Answer: For one year only. If there have been two consecutive years of a temporary PAN, it has to be made permanent which is a more complex process.</p>
5.3	<p><u>Question: How much movement happens in-year with children changing schools?</u></p> <p>Answer: It is typically stable. The change across the borough is that there are spare places in many schools and therefore there is greater scope to change schools.</p>
5.4.	<p><u>Question: Are there any concerns about the OFSTED inspections?</u></p> <p>Answer: There are cross site meetings to ensure robust systems are in place. The council is undertaking a music review with all schools to ensure good standards of teaching. A great deal of activity takes place to monitor standards and identify areas for improvement across all three schools.</p>
5.5	<p><u>Question: Can pupils learning musical instruments take the exams for grades in that instrument?</u></p>

	Answer: The Federation outsources the teaching of instruments to Hackney Music Service, which provides peripatetic teachers. They do have the chance to take the exams for grades.
5.6	<u>Question: Can the school be more transparent to parents about attendance rules?</u> Answer: The information is made available to parents and is on the website. The Federation does a great deal to ensure that all parents are aware of expectations and of their responsibilities. Letters are sent out to parents of children with 95% or lower attendance. Meetings with the attendance officer are arranged.
5.7	<u>Question: How did you find the last Communications Officer?</u> Answer: Fortunate recruitment. There is a clear job description which will help to identify the right candidate again.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>School Sub Committee Feedback</b>
6.1	<u>Southwold - RC</u>
6.1.1	The <a href="#">Southwold Committee meeting minutes of 30 November 2024</a> were shared for information.
6.1.2	The following highlights were noted: Expected standards are higher than the national average in all subjects. All teaching is good or better with more rated as outstanding since the summer. Staff wellbeing is a priority. Good practice is celebrated. A survey found that 100% of respondents think that staff are making a difference. The SDP (School Development Plan) focusses on attendance, subject ladders and curriculum statements,
6.2	<u>Hoxton Garden - RA</u>
6.2.1	The Hoxton Garden Committee meeting <a href="#">minutes of 7 December 2023</a> were shared for information.
6.2.2	The following highlights were noted: In KS (Key Stage) 2 92% of pupils were achieving at the expected standard in reading, writing and Maths combined compared to 59% nationally Pupils are making strong progress. Hoxton Garden is the top performing school in Hackney and this has been covered in the press. All teaching is good or better. All senior leaders are taking qualifications The school has gained the Eco School Green flag Award and the Parent Partnership Award. A number of children are due to start at the school during this school year. The staff survey was very positive. Staff stated that there is a well-balanced curriculum and there are career development opportunities.
6.3	<u>Orchard – SOB</u>  The following points were noted: Outcomes are above the national average 100% of teaching is good or better and most is outstanding. There has been one suspension this school year. There were five last year. The roll is stable.



	43 staff completed the survey, nine more than last year. The results were positive, particularly with regard to staff wellbeing.
6.3.1	The Orchard Committee meeting <a href="#">minutes of 23 November 2023</a> were shared for information.
<b>7.0</b>	<b><a href="#">Feedback from Resources Sub-Committee</a></b>
7.1	<u>Pay Committee / Budget Review (6 month update) / Policies: Procurement Policy</u>
7.1.1	JG gave an oral summary. Highlights were as follows:  AS was welcomed as a new member. The Pay Sub Committee had met to consider headteachers' pay and the results had been ratified by the Resources Committee. The six month budget review showed income to be higher than originally forecast. Expenditure on teachers' pay, energy and agency staff have been high. The school will run an in-year deficit. The carry forward will be reduced.
7.1.2	Question: Will the mayor's funding formula for free school meals lead to a reduced income? Answer: No, the amount per meal is more than the cost. However, the money is received in tranches through the year. Similarly, some SEND funding is still awaited.
7.1.3	Question: What are the plans for the caretaker's house? Answer: The Federation is in the process of developing a flexible community space for rental. However, the change in circumstance means there may now be less demand and forecasting is taking place to understand the profit / loss margins.
7.2	<u>Code of Practice and Scheme of Delegation, Finance Procedures</u>
7.2.1	Highlights were as follows: These were received and approved on behalf of the Full Governing Body.
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Link governors and training</b>
8.1	<u>Health and Safety Systems and Management (SB) / Curriculum Design for KS1 and KS2 (VC) / Understanding the resources available to support challenging behaviour (LM)</u>
8.1.1	In the absence of SB, the report on Health and Safety management was held over.  <b>Curriculum Design in in KS 1 and KS 2 (VC)</b>  There is a certain amount of flexibility to design the curriculum, subject to OFSTED guidance. RE is a priority and more structure is to be introduced in the Maths teaching for Years 1 and 2.  In literacy, there are the big six core texts including poetry and history. Year 6 are studying A Midsummer Night's Dream.  Knowledge organisers are being prepared for different subjects.

	<p>There was a discussion about the PHSE (Personal, Health, Social and Economic) Curriculum.</p> <p><b>Understanding the resources available to support challenging behaviour (LM)</b></p> <p>Staff receive training which shares the key messages about the culture of the school and the approach to disciplinary matters.</p> <p>Staff aim to develop a positive relationship with children.</p> <p>They instil expectations e.g. by praising a child who is behaving well in the presence of one who is behaving badly rather than criticising.</p> <p>There is a balance of rewards and sanctions.</p> <p>A consistent approach is adopted so that children know what to expect. There is a sanctions ladder which is applied in the same way by all adults.</p> <p>Behaviour charts are used with a traffic lights system and ClassDojo. Prizes are given for good behaviour. At the time of the visit there had been no suspensions. The Federation's approach is generally effective in promoting good behaviour.</p>
8.1.2	<p><u>Question: Have there been any recent changes in the approach to discipline?</u></p> <p>Answer: The sanctions ladder has a core place in policy. It is a fair and transparent system of appropriate sanction to a behaviour for all staff.</p>
8.1.3	<p><u>Question: Do parents know about the behaviour policy?</u></p> <p>Answer: It is talked about at coffee mornings, on the website and available in the school office.</p>
8.2	<u>Governor Training Update</u>
8.2.1	There will be training on safeguarding and OFSTED preparation as noted above.
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Consideration of Key Policies</b>
9.1	<a href="#">Complaints Policy</a>
9.2	This was last reviewed two years ago and has not changed.
9.3	<p>Question: What is the role of Hackney Education in the complaints process?</p> <p>Answer: None in the Federation's policy. In some circumstances a complaint can be made to OFSTED which may contact the local authority as part of its investigation.</p>
9.4	The policy was agreed.
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Any other Business</b>
11.1	<p><u>Question: There has been a recent report published on gender identity. What impact will it have?</u></p> <p>Answer: It will not have a significant impact as it is not statutory. There is a consultation and replies are on an individual basis. Any guidance that is issued may be included in the Behaviour Policy.</p>

	<p><u>Question: Have any children raised issues with the pronouns they want to use?</u>  A: Children do at times express a preference. The parents are fully involved in discussing the matter and the school works with individual families where there is need to which ensures good understanding, wider support and meeting the child's preferences.</p>
12.0	<b>Other Supporting Papers</b>
12.1	<a href="#">Glossary of Common Terms</a>

The meeting finished at 7.46 PM.

**ACTION LOG**

Meeting date	Item	Action	Person Responsible	Status
08/02/2024	2.3.1	TOW to inform RD of any declarations of interest..	Clerk	Pending
08/02/2024	3.2.	SEMH to be added to glossary	RD	Pending
08/02/2024	4.1	RD to arrange OFSTED training and share notes and previous OFSTED questions	RD	Pending
08/02/2024	4.1	Materials examining options for the schools' future to be circulated and subject to be on the agenda of next Full Governing Body meeting.	RD/Clerk	Pending

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

**James Gowland**  
Chair of the Full Governing Body  
The Viridis Federation