



# East Reading Federation

## Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Board Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025.1600 Community room

Present: Dave Dymond (Chair); Robert Howell (EHT); Laura Kerr (HoS); Andrew Burrell; Katherine Fowler; Aaron Hatherley; Simon Higgs; Chris Robinson. Francis Jakeman; Zoe Watling.

Apologies: Adedayo Benson; Steph Mitchell; Vincent Onuchi Kris Jones;

In attendance: Alice De Croos (SBM); Liz Newton (SBM)

Clerk: No Clerk - Deborah Savage absent on sick leave

Agenda Item	
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>Everyone was welcomed to the meeting, including our newly elected Staff Governor, Simon Higgs. Apologies in advance has been received from Francis, Ade and Zoe and these were accepted. DD thanked staff for their time preparing the reports for this meeting. Jonathan Dewsbury a has said due to time pressure he is unable to join us on the Governing Board at this time.</p>
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest.</b></p> <p>Those present were reminded to declare any conflicts of interest and the chair would try to make changes to the agenda so items could be discussed in a different order allowing those with any conflicts to leave the meeting prior to the discussion. LK declared an interest in item 6 it was agreed to move this to a part 2 meeting when it arose.</p>
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held 11th February 2025.</b></p> <p>The minutes of this meeting had been shared in advance. The Chair outlined a few section titles. <b>They were accepted as a true record.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Actions were reviewed – all had been completed.</p>
4.	<p><b>4th Quarter Revenue and Capital Report ASPS.</b></p> <p>AC spoke to her report on the 4th quarter revenue and capital budget for ASPS which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The chair invited the SBM to make any comments or draw governors’ attention to key points in the report.</p> <p>Governor CR sent Questions ahead of meeting on finance.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> Some of the papers are clearly labelled Redlands or ASPS but not all; For example, I know ‘4th Report to Governors 2025’ refers to Redlands because it comes from LN, but it would help just to use the ‘naming’ protocol consistently.</p> <p>Absolutely - we'll ensure its clear which school is which going forwards</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> I appreciate the difference between the 3% assumed and 5.5% actual pay</p>

	<p><b>rise. Was there any additional allocation to cover this and what happened about the additional NI/pension oncosts?</b></p> <p>Yes, both schools received Teachers Pay and Teachers Pension grants - which did cover the shortfall in 2024.2025, and has now been absorbed into the GAG funding for 25.26. The NI grant is a new grant for 2025.2026, and again, will be absorbed into GAG from 26.27. We received no grants for support staff pay rises.</p> <p><b>Governor Question: ARP funding – does the ARP funding (both schools) cover the actual cost or do we think we might generate a ‘profit’?</b></p> <p>I haven't done a cost analysis for the new FY, but can do that in time for the next FGB.</p> <p>The SBM informed the meeting that there is currently a healthy in year balance which is about £30-40K more than expected at budget setting. This means that the expected carry forward for this financial year would be approx. £386K (which equates to roughly one month's staff salary costs). There had been a huge number of staffing changes over both schools this year, which was hard to manage and predict financially, so the school is very pleased to have the staffing line come in at close to budget allocation. Income for SEND was much greater than expected.</p> <p><b>Governor Question: SEND funding in both schools was more than expected – are we spending this on the children who need it?</b> Yes – we have employed additional staff to support SEND children but have also seen the number of children with EHCPs rise from 11 to 17, which has seen an increase in funds. We may need to employ additional staff.</p>
5.	<p><b>4th quarter revenue and capital report for Redlands</b></p> <p>LN Redlands SBM spoke to her report on the 4th quarter revenue and capital budget for Redlands LN had provided governors her notes on the report beforehand.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment: Redlands has a bigger in year deficit than the ‘actual’ for last year (£82k v £ 56k). This clearly isn’t sustainable and my understanding is we will be submitting a deficit budget application showing what we plan to do. On first reading the detail wasn’t there but, after I phoned you, the plans are now available such that governors have the necessary information to understand the deficit recovery plan – we might need to unpack this a bit and hear the reassurance provided by conversations with RBC finance. I appreciate the future years’ projections have so many variables as to be a fiction but direction of travel is a concern.</b></p> <p>We don't have to submit a deficit plan for ASPS, as we have a carry forward. The direction of travel is a huge concern, but having spent time going through it line by line with finance can be wholly attributed to pupil numbers, and the budget we have proposed has no fat left to trim. We worked out that due to so many grants ceasing this year, in real terms we have only £25k more to spend this year than last. Allocations for Reception starters for September 2025 is currently 20 pupils. This will likely go up a bit by the summer - but obviously this is a concern for future years.</p> <p>The chair invited the Redlands SBM to make any comments or draw governors’ attention to key points in the report. The Redlands SBM informed the meeting that the staffing changes at Redlands during this year were enormous and that, combined with low numbers in the Nursery, had made this year very challenging. It was hoped that a balanced budget could be set for Redlands for the 2025/26 year but doing this would remain challenging.</p>
6.	<p><b>Federation structure 2025/6</b> LK left the meeting now for a part 2 item</p> <p>This agenda discussion was recorded under Part 2 minutes.</p>
7.	<p><b>Proposed budgets 25.26, includes a 5-year model (both schools)</b></p> <p>As part of any long-term financial planning the school must undertake budget modelling</p>

	<p>The school has undertaken the exercise for both Redlands and ASPS. By 2030 the Redlands the budget projection model declines to -1,248,693.73 but even at ASPS there is a predicted future deficit budget of -66,456.33.</p>
8.	<p><b>Resources report.</b></p> <p>A resources report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p><u>Staffing Update</u></p> <p>Work is already underway to assess teaching vacancies for September 2025. All teaching staff have been invited to complete an Expression of Interest form, providing an opportunity to discuss their preferences with their HT.</p> <p>At Alfred Sutton, a highly capable Higher-Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) has decided to undertake an on-the-job QTS qualification and will step into a class teacher role from September. As part of this transition, she will cover DH maternity leave at Redlands, providing a cost-effective solution while giving her valuable experience to support her success as a teacher.</p> <p>This school term, ED (HLTA at Alfred Sutton) has stepped in to cover a long-term sickness absence at Redlands. She has made a fantastic contribution, and her flexibility has ensured continuity for pupils while also saving much-needed funds for Redlands' budget. The staffing flexibility across the Federation is proving to be highly effective, both in terms of staff development opportunities and financial sustainability.</p> <p>We have recruited an experienced caretaker at Redlands, MH, who is already making a positive impact. He is being supported by JD to ensure a smooth transition and to quickly familiarise himself with the compliance and operational aspects of the role. DP has now transitioned to Alfred Sutton, where he is providing essential support while JD is working offsite on a split shift. In addition, DP has taken on the cleaning role at Redlands, which has allowed us to finally fill that long-standing vacancy.</p> <p>At the point of budget setting, we currently <b>have only two known vacancies</b> across the Federation. However, we anticipate the resignation of one additional teacher from Alfred Sutton. This careful forward planning will enable a smooth transition and ensure stability in staffing for the next academic year.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety Update</u></p> <p>The appointment of LN as a full-time School Business Manager at Redlands has brought improved clarity around site maintenance priorities and strengthened oversight of health and safety processes across the school.</p> <p>However, Governors' need to be aware of a serious recent incident. A staff member at Redlands sustained a significant injury when struck by a rock [from play equipment] thrown by a pupil with complex SEND needs. The incident resulted in the staff member losing consciousness and experiencing seizures, with further medical investigation revealing bruising and swelling to the brain. This incident was immediately escalated to the Local Authority, who have been supportive in their response.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> On the H&amp;S rock throwing incident please explain how a child with complex needs had access to a rock? The rock (pebble/stone) is a standard feature of early years play, HOS and the team have been working on a Risk Assessment Tuesday. This distressing event highlights the ongoing challenge of balancing the complex needs of pupils with SEND and</p>

maintaining the safety and wellbeing of our staff and wider school community. We are continuing to review our risk assessments, staffing levels, and support strategies to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place.

Site Development Update

At Alfred Sutton, we are in the fortunate position of being able to fund several major projects this academic year, totalling in excess of £100k. These include play equipment and the car park barrier in addition to the roof replacement—funded by the Local Authority. At Redlands, staff continue to work with the very proactive PTA on projects

The Branding Project



Over the past eight weeks, AC and VM have been leading a collaboration with a group of Typography students from the University of Reading to develop a brand identity for our Federation. Governors will be kept informed of progress.

Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning (ICFP)

The business managers attended a seminar on ICFP.

A key highlight of the day was a session led by School Resource Management Advisers (SRMAs), who shared practical strategies for achieving cost efficiencies through more effective staff deployment—ultimately leading to better outcomes for pupils. This should help the school with strategic planning for the year ahead

IT Provider Update

A new IT provider has been sourced for the federation.

A new email format will follow shortly (e.g. joebloggs@eastreadingfederation.sch.uk). Communication across and between both schools will be significantly better.

**Governor Comment:** IT provider – great news! Any idea as to when we’ll get the new emails etc?

I'm hopeful it will be before we break for Summer - it's their first priority.

**9. Approval of Local Offer from both schools.**

Both schools have now published their local offer as required on the websites. Links to the Local Offers can be found on the RBC website. SBM demonstrated the link on the room whiteboard for Governors to see.

**DECISION:** Governors approved the local offers.

**10. Policies for adoption / approval:**

a. Support staff pay policy - Federation label source RBC – 3yrs cycle - **Approved**

	<p>b. Managing sickness absence - Federation label source RBC – 3yrs cycle - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>c. Anti Bullying and Harassment policy - Federation label source RBC – 3yrs cycle - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>d. Roles and Responsibilities statement - Federation label source RBC – 1yrs cycle - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>e. Social Media Policy- Federation label source RBC – 3yrs cycle - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>f. Security policy – ASP label source RBC – 3yrs cycle - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>g. complaints policy – ASP label source RBC – 1yrs cycle - <b>Approved</b></p> <p>Governors were asked to speak to and approve each policy.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>EHT update</b></p> <p>No report or update</p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Chairs report</b></p> <p>No report</p>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Pay committee report</b></p> <p>The Pay committee reported to the GB.</p> <p>The committee met on the 17th March to consider the support staff pay awards. We carried out our normal process following our terms of reference. We were given anonymous assessments of various types of staff and their recommendations. There were admin staff and classroom-based staff. The panel unanimously accepted the recommendations of the school where awards were made.</p>
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Governors in school day</b></p> <p>A short report was given on how governors found their morning and lunch in ASPS and afternoon in Redlands</p> <p>They saw lessons being delivered and spoke to selected children. The DHT's supported each group of governors while they were visiting classes.</p>
<b>15</b>	<p><b>Issues for Parents/Confidentiality.</b></p> <p>Some items were recorded under Part 2 confidential minutes.</p>
<b>16</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business.</b></p> <p>The Redlands Safe Use of IT policy, small amendment approved by governors responding to email request from COG and HOS</p> <p>Statement of Internal Control 2025 ASPS is to be signed by CoG.</p> <p>Statement of Internal Control 2025 Redlands</p> <p>Application for licensed deficit for schools – Redlands</p> <p>Training – all governors must make sure that their safeguarding training and statement on the code of practice is up to date on the federation Govhub governor record.</p>
<b>17</b>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b></p> <p>Tuesday 29th April 2025 is to be a training meeting with training to be delivered by Alice Boon.</p> <p>The Tribunal directed meeting will take place on 6th May.</p>

Meeting closed: 17.52pm

**Actions:**

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Responsibility:</b>	<b>Timescale:</b>
DD to sign the Statement of Internal Controls	DD	ASAP
Error on the Federation Staffing Plan for 25.26	AC	ASAP
Costings of ARP – sent to Deborah	AC	ASAP
Send ASPs HT JD to ZW, CR and DD	AC	ASAP
Monitor Redlands Send child staff assault, where is LA review of Send accidents	LK	ASAP
Request School; Resource Management Adviser invite	AC	ASAP
Check Roofer between building safety measures	AC	ASAP
ER FED – badging next steps	AC	ASAP

**Attendance at FGB meetings Jan-July 25 (4 meetings to date)**

Dave Dymond	4 of 4 meetings
Robert Howell	4 of 4 meetings
Laura Kerr	4 of 4 meetings
Adedayo Benson	1 of 4 meetings
Vincent Onuchi	3 of 4 meetings
David Colwill	1 of 4 meetings
Zoe Watling	2 of 4 meetings
Chris Robinson	4 of 4 meetings
Katherine Fowler	4 of 4 meetings
Francis Jakeman	3 of 4 meetings
Aaron Hatherley	4 of 4 meetings
Kris Jones	2 of 4 meetings
Jonathan Dewsbury	0 of 4 meetings
Andrew Burrell	3 of 3 possible meetings
Stephanie Mitchell	2 of 3 possible meetings
Simon Higgs	2 of 2 possible meetings