



RUTLAND AND DISTRICT
SCHOOLS' FEDERATION

MINUTES OF THE FEDERATION MEMBERS & TRUST MEETING

Thursday 3 July 2025, 3pm
The Gallery

PRESENT

Members

Andrew Holt (Chair)
Judith Gilboy (via Teams)
Sarah Sykes

Trustees

Andrew Holt (Chair)
Rob Guthrie
Guy Magrath
Alex Mould
Clive Norgaard Morton
Stuart Williams (Executive Principal)

IN ATTENDANCE

Kelly Jackson (Head of Catmose Primary), Oliver Teasel (Head of Harington School), Chris Wilson (Chief Finance Officer), Sheryl Wilson (Governance Professional).

1. WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Andrew Holt welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Rob Mulvey (Member), Laurence Howard (Member), Andrew Cross (Trustee), Mark Tinkler (Trustee) and Lindsey Madeley-Harland (Trustee).

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

The minutes from the below meetings were signed to be a true and accurate record.

- Trust meeting - Thursday 27 March 2025
- Audit and Risk Assessment Committee, topic - Finance - 15 May 2025
- Members minutes – Thursday 4 July 2024

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Previous Trust minutes refer to quotes being obtained for a pathway from the Barleythorpe Road onto the College site. The quotes are proving to be expensive, therefore, this is not a carry forward item.

5. Clerk's Business

The meeting dates for 2025/2026 were distributed and approved.

The Department for Education have released the Academy Trust Handbook for 2025, this will be reviewed over the summer and updates given at the first meeting of the new academic year. Trustees and Members were encouraged to read the handbook.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-handbook/academy-trust-handbook-2025-effective-from-1-september-2025>

Trustees were asked to complete their identity verification on Companies House.

6. Principal's Annual Report

Another busy year for the College with not only academic progress, but opportunities for trips and visits including foreign exchanges, a trip to Malaysia, the Imperial War Museum, Leicester University, Woburn and Sheringham. Year 11 students enjoyed their end of term Prom as a celebration of their time at Catmose and they were well prepared for the exam season.

Extracurricular opportunities also included the College performance of 'We Will Rock You', the Year 7 performance of Matilda, the Spring and Christmas Concert. Expeditions for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award also took place with good numbers of students taking part. The College was recently featured in 'The Times', the article focused on how white, British, disadvantaged students do well and what the College does to support these students.

Attendance is strong at 95%, this figure is almost back to pre-pandemic and is well above the national figure and high when compared to comparable schools. Behaviour is equally strong and improving. From the student surveys, students say that they are safe in College and feel safe. Academic results in 2024 were very strong with the College being in the top 15% of schools for Progress. Free School Meal students' results were high especially for the white British group. The College prides itself on a robust curriculum, bespoke intervention and excellent teaching.

Priorities for next year include:

- Attendance – aim for 96%
- Behaviour – unconditional positive regard
- Maintaining outcomes
- New Ofsted framework

Question: How do you know staff morale is good?

Annually staff are asked to complete a staff survey, the results of which are analysed and added to the Transformation Plan targets. Staff morale is also supported by the low staff turnover and staff do speak out if they are experiencing any issues.

Question: How do you achieve the balance between work levels and maintaining high standards?

Staff are encouraged to strive for the highest of standards, there is little non-contact time which in turn contributes to workload and impacts on finances. Healthy indicators are staff attendance and recruitment.

Trustees commented that it was welcoming to hear student voice from different groups, such as services children, peer mentors and young carers at the local governing body meetings throughout the year.

7. Head of Harington School Annual Report

In August 2024 the School welcomed 173 new Year 12 students. Whilst the majority join from Catmose College and Uppingham Community College, there has been consistent growth in numbers from Casterton, John Ferneley and Long Field.

A level results in 2024 were some of the best results in the school's history, with over 30% achieving A*-A and over 85% A*-C, with a value-added score of 0.2 which placed Harington in the 'Above Average' when compared to schools nationally.

Open Evening last November was well attended and over 200 Year 11 students were welcomed to the Taster Sessions in December and January. 332 students have applied to join Harington in August 2025. This is a new record and exceeds 305 applications from last year. Maths, Psychology and History remain the most popular subjects.

The School continues to run a vibrant trips and visits programme with sport also taking a lead performance; the football team enjoyed another strong season and a rugby team competed for the first time from Harington. The netball team competed in the Leicestershire tournament. Music students have also been involved with the Spring Concert, Christmas Concert and Rotary competitions.

There is also a strong emphasis on student leadership with the Greenpower team competing in the F24+ category with their two cars. Taking part in Greenpower allows students to gain hands-on engineering experience whilst also developing management and finance skills in a fully student-led project. Now in its fourth year, the team aims to improve on last year's ranking of 25th overall and 10th in class. Year 12 students impressed at the Young Enterprise competition, Harington's Wild Flower Wishes won the Most Innovative, Best Presentation, and Overall Winner with sustainable planting kits designed for children.

Harington DocSoc students have also had the pleasure of welcoming speakers and over 50 students are on course to complete their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The School was also delighted with the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection - Harington School continues to be an Outstanding provider. As one student said to the lead inspector "Harington is shaping who I am and who I want to be" which Oliver Teasel explained summed up the school incredibly well.

Priorities for next year

- Make the most of term 6 for Year 12 students; identify any issues and intervene early.
- Review potential Harington expansion.
- Integration between Year 12 and Year 13 students.
- Review annual surveys and incorporate changes into the transformation plan.

Trustees commented that the work is very impressive and this is endorsed by the number of student applications. When visiting Harington, the respectful and purposeful interaction is commented upon.

8. Head of Catmose Primary Annual Report

Primary pupils have enjoyed residential visits, including archery, instruction of caving and visits to Wing Hall Farm, they have also taken part in the Christmas Concert, the May Dance, Harvest Tea and productions.

Attendance is high at 97%, with 209 pupils on roll. Outcomes are in line with national and teaching is rated as effective or better. The reputation of the primary is strong in the community and there are good links with the Rutland Learning Trust who offer a wide range of sporting opportunities for pupils.

Priorities for 2025/2026

- Inclusion and challenge, ensuring all pupils are supported to make the very best progress in core and foundation subjects.
- Writing – further developing the whole school approach to improve writing outcomes for all pupils – teacher training.
- Behaviour support and nurture, utilising the Paul Dix ‘When the adults change’ guidance.

9. Chief Finance Officer Annual Report

The Federation finances are in a good position, although our reserves are expected to reduce this year by circa £150,000. The main reasons for this reduction is the retention payment paid for the Barlow Building expansion works (£74.5k), and the Sports Hall refurbishment (£79k). These sums have already been received and reported in the previous year’s audited accounts.

The finances are tightly run, it is difficult especially with the ‘lagged funding’ for the additional pupils. (30 new students are admitted each year for a 5-year period, but funding is not received until the following year). This ‘lost’ funding amounts to circa £180k next year.

Catmose Primary

The Primary School is expected to be full next year with 210 pupils. Other primary schools in the area are struggling for numbers.

Catmose College

We are taking our 4th intake of 240 students into Year 7 (KS3), with the first cohort moving into Year 10 (KS4). The College will be full with total pupils of circa 1160.

Harington School

Harington is full, and demand for places for next year remains very high. We are expecting to take a further 175/180 pupils next year, which will increase the student numbers to 340. Preliminary planning work is due to begin for an extension to Harington School. Due to the lagged nature of our funding, we will be funded for 329 students next year which equates to £56k less than the 340 students would give us.

Student numbers are the key driver of the Federation’s finances as we are paid per pupil with over 80% of income paying salaries for teachers and support staff.

10. Telephone Mast Update

An application had been received for a telephone mast to be erected on the College site. Stuart Williams highlighted the area on a map which is problematic, due to the potential Harington School expansion. The heads of term and access areas are currently being discussed with solicitors. This also requires ESFA approval.

11. Harington School Expansion Update

An initial meeting has been held with an architect to discuss the potential planning of Harington School expansion. The next stage would be to scope a RIBA Stage 1 initial feasibility plan and RIBA Stage 2 to outline proposals. Trustees and Members agreed to proceed with RIBA Stage 1 and 2 and the costings of £15700.

12. Policies

The below policies were shared with trustees prior to the meeting with details of the amends.

- Staff Development policy
- Federation Exclusion policy

The policies were ratified.

13. A.O.B

Trustees commented on the high-level of presentations in the meeting which demonstrated the transformation plan targets achieved for this year and the priorities for next year.