



**Minutes of Willingham Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting
held online on Wednesday 29th April 2020 at 4.30pm**

Present

Katy Stevenson (KS) Chair
Jo Aldhouse (JA)
Sarah Ashworth (SA)
Emma Fuller (EF)
Louise Johnston (LJ)
Elise Kinnear (EK)
Matt Lockyer (ML)
David Morel (DM) Headteacher
Sarah Morgan (SM)
Sarah Nelson (SN)
Chris Shaw (CS)
Angela Walker (AW)

Also in attendance: Christine Brandon (Camclerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome & Apologies

All Governors were welcomed to the meeting. Apologies for absence were conveyed to the meeting on behalf of Dan Lentell and Emma Mason.

2. Declarations of Interest

No pecuniary interests were declared.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 11th March 2020 were approved as a correct record and will be formally signed by the Chair at the next ordinary meeting.

ACTION: Clerk

In terms of follow up, CS questioned the decision to defer the review of school sports provision to the Autumn Term given the impact this might have on teaching staff in September. In response, the Head Teacher asserted that the continuing Corona virus lockdown or partial return to school potentially could have a greater impact and that, notwithstanding, Sports Provision would continue to be managed by the School in a similar way during this extended period.

4. Head Teacher's Report

In advance of the meeting, Governors had received a copy of a summary report from the Head Teacher and written comments and questions in response from EK, DL, SM and CS.

DM began his report by presenting the response received to a questionnaire sent to all parents on 28th April which had revealed that respondents, generally, were content with the way in which the school had communicated since the lock down with 96% of those that had replied having accessed material placed on the Learning Hub. Of those accessing the Hub, 75% had indicated that the material/instructions were easy to follow and provided sufficient activity. A copy of the full response to the questionnaire is appended to these Minutes (Appendix A).

Having asked for feedback from Parent Governors, ML commented that those teachers who had participated had done a good job but he added that there were noticeable absentees and many of these had not become involved in the YouTube Channel either. DM accepted that this approach favoured those more comfortable with IT and asked Governors to comment on whether Staff should be made to engage. SA concurred with the view that the You Tube delivery was the best way to engage with children but understood the anxiety of those staff who might not want to be involved given that the sessions generated would be available to view in the public domain. AW explained that the School had to use various presentation methods to achieve a balance of activity as EYES/Y1 children were less able to read screen text and instruction for example. The School was exploring the use of Microsoft Teams to set work and to host whole class story-telling and small focussed catch up groups.

Before any decision was made to make teachers participate in IT provision, EK expressed concern that the school should ensure the online safety of teaching staff and understand, in the first instance, what the objections and anxieties might be of those who had been unwilling to participate to date.

Referring to the questionnaire results, EK asked whether the school was aware of the percentage of families with online access. DM replied that the school had an email address for every parent but was not in a position to send letters out to those who might not have replied. Questions around the timing and consistency of presentation were asked by Governors and, in response, DM explained that all teaching staff were flexible but had different home situations with some able to spend more time than others on You Tube and On Line content. He accepted that the School should continue to explore new and different ways of engaging with children. The question of training and good practice was raised by SN. The meeting was assured that online PD sessions were an option and that an exercise to identify which staff needed additional assistance was underway. In response to points made by CS, the Head Teacher reported that 53% of survey respondents had indicated that they were willing to support their children with their school work whereas 39% had expressed doubt. Having regard to the views expressed, DM concluded that Governors were of the opinion that teachers should not be required to use You Tube if they were unhappy doing so, that other opportunities to interact with children should be explored and that staff should be carefully supported in

this respect going forward. To seek to find some common agreement, the Chair requested that this subject be discussed at the next PD meeting.

In continued discussion, DM confirmed that children were not sharing completed work with their teachers as the School currently had no capacity to receive it.

Returning to the question of parental support, EK was aware that some schools were checking, at least once a week, whether children were able to access and undertake school work. If no evidence could be found, further action was being taken. Although he confirmed that staff were looking to identify those children not engaging, DM asked Governors to let him know if they were aware of any methods being used by other schools in these circumstances.

In terms of learning plans going forward, DM accepted that the children could not be expected to revise earlier work for much longer and that the school would have to move towards the teaching of new subject content. Advice had suggested that it was best to focus on revision rather than new topics but if the shutdown was to continue until September, this position would need to be revisited. SN asked whether guidance had been issued to parents to help them draw out the educational quality of an activity. Whilst general advice on what parents should be doing had been issued, this had not been too prescriptive. A broad range of activity rather than specific questions was the School's approach and whilst there were lots of different resources on offer externally, inconsistency of approach might not be particularly helpful to children.

Mention had been made of the integration of the Oak National Academy in to Off Site Learning provision. In addition to the differences in curriculum provision, DM expressed concern that this might also create a gap in learning between those children who might readily understand new content and those who don't which potentially could create problems on their return to school. Government announcements in the period to half term would determine the Strategy the school would have to take going forward. Clearly, it would become a bigger issue if the school was not to reopen before September. The Chair also drew attention to the potential impact of lockdown schooling between SEN and other children, how this might be bridged and the need to make provision in the budget to address any imbalance.

In terms of risk management, and whilst DM found it difficult to envisage how the school might operate in the future, the SMT had identified a series of risk factors to take into account when children returned to school, Honeypots, pre and post school clubs. These were –

- the wellbeing of children
- the academic gap
- the work expectation (of children)
- behavioural expectation
- social distancing
- limits placed on sharing resources

Headteacher: David Morel. Chair of Governors: Katy Stevenson

- how to mix children if school is advised to open incrementally
- behavioural routines re drilled (repeatedly)
- conversations required with key workers on child care
- Transition arrangements for EYES/Y1 and Y6 to Secondary School
- Relationships with parents
- Integration of new members of staff
- Concerns in respect of exposure to virus: children not attending school/staff shielding
- Impact of timetabling on teachers' own children
- Managing the welfare and wellbeing of staff

Discussion turned to the closure of Honeypots and pre and post school clubs and the impact on the budget of the loss of income from this provision. Reference was made to the potential need to furlough 2 members of staff to offset the loss of income. In terms of other staff, DM reported that the School had received Government Guidance on management of the building during closure so he was hoping that something similar would be issued on reopening. He added that some TAs and Cleaners were still performing the same jobs. It was only teachers, other TAs and Honeypots staff who were being asked to operate differently. Some lunchtime staff continued at school whilst others had been delegated to deliver free school meals. Regarding the allocation of PPE for teachers, Governors understood that the School would await Government advice before making any decision.

Governors accepted that both Government and LEA guidelines would emerge over the next few weeks.

Having asked about the morale of teachers, DM reported that attention had focussed on the current situation such that the return to 'normal' school routines had not yet been discussed but given experience during the first week of lockdown, some might have concerns around health issues. External expertise in anxiety/bereavement counselling for example might need to be considered.

Replying to written questions from Dan Lentell regarding day by day attendance at school, DM reported that there had been 21 key worker children and one vulnerable child on the first day of closure but that this had reduced since the lockdown to 5-10/11 children per day with 1 or 2 of those on the vulnerable list. The school was continuing to encourage children to attend. DM confirmed that there was no vulnerable child that had not either been contacted by phone or seen during school meal drop offs. AW explained the way in which Key Workers and vulnerable families notified the school that their children would be attending in the forthcoming week and what clubs they might be attending. Staff would phone if a child who had been expected did not turn up for school.

Currently, the School did not have a policy to reduce the transmission of communicable diseases but this would be reconsidered when School reopened.

A response to questions asked by Governors is also enclosed with these Minutes as Appendix B.

The Chair encouraged Governors to contact DM if they had any further questions or comments.

ACTION: DM

5. Budget 2020/21

Louise Johnston, Chair of the Finance & Premises Committee and Jo Aldhouse, School Business Manager gave a brief overview of the 2019/20 outturn and reported on the proposed school budget for 2020/21. Copies of a summary report, Budget comparison summary and the School's BPS Revenue Financial Forecast to 2022/23 had been circulated to Governors in advance. Governors were advised that the school would carry forward a surplus of £89,540 to 2020/21. However, in terms of the budget for 2020/21, based on a 12 class structure, the assumption that 305 children would be attending WPS from September, that funding per pupil in 2020/21 would not increase to £4000 (currently £3,750) and having regard to several other key factors, the Governing Body understood that there would be a deficit in 2020/21 of £85,176. It was confirmed that the budget was required to be submitted to Cambridgeshire County Council by 7th May and that there was no allowance for unknown expenditure or loss of income that might be caused by current circumstances. Although it had been forecast that there would be a carry forward of £4365 to 2021/22, the Governing Body was asked to consider whether it was prepared to approve an in year deficit budget.

Given the current uncertainty around income, JA discussed the option of placing two pre and post school Club employees on furlough and advised Governors that a decision in this respect would need to be taken by the end of June. There were a series of criteria to meet to take advantage of this scheme including potential redundancy. On the same theme, DM reminded Governors that the school had recently advertised for 2 posts to cover for maternity leave. He was of the view that it was not currently financially prudent to recruit to both posts. Although there was a potential risk to the School in September, DM considered that the School could continue to manage 12 classes to the end of the Summer Term.

Governors agreed to recruit to one maternity leave cover post only subject to review, if necessary, in the Autumn Term and to re consider, at some future stage, whether the School could continue to operate a 12 class structure. DM confirmed that there were several strong applicants for the EYES post and he would hope to recruit a good quality candidate based on the long term interests of the school.

Whereupon and mindful of the uncertainty around income and the reopening of school, it was

RESOLVED

- a) that the 2020/21 School Budget be approved and signed by the Chair for submission to the LA;
- b) that, subject to further review in the Autumn Term, recruitment to one post of maternity leave cover be deferred; and
- c) that the appreciation of the Governing Body be extended to Louise Johnston and Jo Aldhouse for their tremendous work and effort and the contribution they both had made to the budget process.

ACTION: JA, DM & Chair

6. Policy for Ratification: Intimate Care Policy

Having been advised that no complaints had been received under the Policy, the Governing Body

RESOLVED

that the Intimate Care Policy (February 2020) be approved.

ACTION: DM

7. Governing Body Business: Recognising Success

i. Recognising Success -The Chair congratulated DM and his staff for the astonishing effort that had been made to continue learning provision in the current climate. KS added that she had received fantastic and positive feedback from the community and had been delighted with the energy and enthusiasm shown by all who had contributed. On behalf of Governors, the Chair extended her gratitude to all Staff and, suggested that when normality returned, it would be their intention to recognise everyone's efforts in a meaningful way.

DM undertook to pass this message on to staff. He also took the opportunity to commend the contribution made by AW who assumed responsibility for the school when he had to undergo a period of self-isolation.

As the school would remain open during half-term for key workers, Governors encouraged both DM and AW to make sure that they arranged to take time away from their duties.

ACTION: DM/AW

ii. Staff Rota - AW described the way in which Staff Rota had been arranged since the School had been asked to close. This had taken into account full and part time working hours and days normally worked. The rota also allowed for opening of the Breakfast and After School Clubs. Staff not rostered on a particular day were encouraged to undertake first aid or key learning courses at home.

8. Key Takeaways from Committee Meetings

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Premises Committee held on 24th April 2020 had been circulated in advance to assist discussion on the Budget.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Governing Body would be held on 24th June 2020 at a time to be decided depending on circumstances at that time. Noted the potential for an extraordinary meeting in the interim should it be necessary.

ACTION: All to Note.



Chair

The Meeting ended at 6.35pm

