

**Didsbury CE Governors REMOTE MEETING
Wednesday 24th June 2020 at 7.30pm
Minutes**

Present:

Catriona Arundale	Foundation Governor
Simon Ball	Head of School
Nick Bundock	Foundation Governor
Andrew Ballantyne	Foundation Governor
Paul Good	Chair (MDBE)
Emma Hooson	Staff Governor
Matthew Lee	Parent Governor
Philip Robinson	Parent Governor
Helen Stallard	Foundation Governor
Mark Vermes	Foundation Governor
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

Apologies

Sylvia Bradley	Foundation Governor
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In attendance

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
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Any text in red bold italics represents a Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome, Opening Prayer and Apologies for absence

- Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Paul Good. The opening prayer was led by Nick Bundock.
- Apologies were accepted from Sylvia Bradley.

2. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interest

- Catriona Arundale; Helen Stallard; and Phillip Robinson have children in the school. Paul Good has a grandchild in the school.
- There are no other declarations other than those listed on the school website.

3. Note the formation a Core Group (Exec Head, Chairs of LGB and HoS) by the Trustees to offer advice and support to leadership teams during the Covid-19 emergency and its continuance until the end of the Academic Year

Governors noted and approved the decision to form a Core Group (Exec

Head, Chairs of LGB and HoS) to offer advice and support to leadership teams during the Covid-19 emergency. This is intended to operate until the end of this academic year.

Q: The end of this academic year is a month away; is the anticipation the core group will not be needed after this?

This will depend on whether the school is working on restricted numbers such as a one-meter rule. Colleagues have looked at the one-meter rule and there are issues which might require children to not be in school full-time. The other reason is if the R rate increases locally.

Some elements of the core groups will continue, this has proved very effective in sharing good practice and information. Stockport MBC was quick to produce a model risk assessment which was shared and adapted in each school. CoGs (chairs of Governors) have been able to offer advice and support and going forward HoS (heads of school) might decide to meet without CoGs.

The Executive Headteacher explained the hope that schools are operating as normal by September 2020. It is expected there will be 30 children in a bubble from September with staggered times. If the school is open as normal the decision-making arrangements will revert back to LGBs.

4. Note and accept of the Core Group minutes as distributed to Governors with specific reference to DCE

Governors accepted and ratified the minutes of the Core Group as distributed to members of the Trust Local Governing Boards (LGB's).

All minutes are uploaded onto Governor Hub.

5. Approve the Appendices relating to Covid-19 arrangements to the:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Governors formally ratified the amendments and appendices made to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy relating to Covid-19 as agreed and approved by the HoS, Executive Headteacher and CoG on their behalf.

The Behaviour Policy

Governors ratified the amendments and appendices made to the Behaviour Protection Policy relating to Covid-19 as agreed and approved by the HoS, Executive Headteacher and CoG on their behalf.

6. Approve the Risk Assessments made in respect of:

Provision for Key Worker and Vulnerable Children attendance and readmittance of designated year groups in line with DfE advice (N, R, Y1 & Y6)

DCE now has Yr6 working offsite at Parris Wood High school requiring a new risk assessment. The DCE risk assessment applies to all other year groups. All children will have some time in school before the end of term.

Governors formally approved the risk assessments

Q: With regard to safeguarding issues, how has this been with children now in school?

The HoS reported he is pleased the children have adjusted to the spacing as they move through the building. Children have adapted well to their learning environment.

7. Ratify the email decision to seek the voluntary transfer of a non-teaching member of staff from DCE to WDCE to reduce the budget deficit

The transfer of a member of staff to WDCE was accepted as a new opportunity. Stephanie Phoenix volunteered and this was a smooth transition.

Governors formally ratified the decision to voluntary transfer a member of the support staff to WDCE.

8. Head of School Report

Premises and Health & Safety

The staff attended training days before readmittance of the designated year groups. The staff have more confidence now they are in the school building.

Progress with the plan to readmit children to school (designated year groups) including current pupil numbers and learning provision

The school has undertaken the wider opening of the school safely and quickly compared to other local schools. The high numbers of KW/V (key worker and vulnerable) children meant the school was confident to expand the opening of the building.

Yr6 are off site, there are 13 teaching bases, 11 in school and 2 off site. There are 160 children in school which is 70% of the school. 30% are learning from home. This is high compared to the national picture and the local situation.

There will be a rotation of each year group to enable all children to have one week in school before the end of term. Not all children have taken up this offer. There are children from the BAME community so their non-attendance might be due to more significant health concerns and the SLT will be sensitive to this.

Remote learning arrangements Y2 – Y5

These remain in place for children when not in school. All Yr5 children are in school this week. There are five lessons for maths and five for English plus other subjects each week in the learning sent home.

Safeguarding and vulnerable children including provision for children with EHCP's Pupil and staff well-being

There are no child protection (CP) children at DCE and no children in need (CIN).

The school has had 6 out of the 9 children with an EHC plan in school; this is also higher than the national trend.

S: The leadership gave praise to Emilie Smith for all her work with families.

The school has had contact with families identified as vulnerable by the school.

Staffing update and staffing for Academic Year 2020-2021

Staff have kept in touch with families, there has been video messages and the school newsletter. Well-being has been the focus for children in school along with some academic work.

In regard to staff well-being, staff have been very busy and have been in school regularly as there were so many KW/V children in school. Staff have worked very hard and have had the chance to work with new staff.

The SLT kept in touch with shielding staff or clinically vulnerable staff and remote staff meetings have occurred.

S: Staff have responded well to the challenges presented and formal thanks were given to the staff from Simon Ball.

Staffing for September

Staffing is in place apart from one more LSA needed for a new child with an EHC plan.

C: How is this role different from the TA role?

A general class TA supports the teacher and is deployed in a classroom under the teacher's direction. An LSA supports a specific child with an EHC plan ensuring aims and objectives are met. The teacher is responsible for the plan and the SLA supports the teacher. This is not 1-1 support as this model does not support independence. The LSA promotes independence and develops the ability to achieve. The LSA might work with small groups. There are nine children with EHC plans in school and the LSA can work with more than one child.

Q: Did this vacancy come about from new children joining the school?

Yes, this is unusual to have the diagnosis this early so this child is likely to have medical needs. There are two children starting in reception with EHC plans.

The children with plans have a broad spectrum of issues. Some children might progress to specialist provision and others might transition to mainstream provision with support.

The move to an in-house SBM saves approximately £10,000 PA.

Preparations for September and outline recovery plans to readmit children to school (dependant on further guidance)

The bubbles of 15 have been working well. The leadership expects the announcement about September will be Friday 3rd July, giving eight weeks to prepare. The bubbles will affect lunch times and after school activities.

The Trust has followed DfE guidance closely at all times and will continue to do so.

Governors noted the school might need to make decisions nearer to the opening. Schools do want clarity and need notice to prepare effectively. The school will plan and make changes rather than wait until closer to the September opening. It was noted Secondary Schools have more urgent planning given the larger number of students.

This school had the highest percentage of children attending in the Trust and high compared to national returns. This has been a difficult time for children socially and emotionally and the school is pleased so many children are returning. One trainee has been secured on an interim basis to support the staff in the school and the Chair of the Trust commended this. The Government has announced there is additional money to support children for catch up.

The Executive Headteacher gave formal thanks to the staff in this school for the safe return of 70% of children. Staff have been genuine in their desire to return to work and the leadership have been very flexible in the staffing.

The CoG gave formal thanks to the HoS and the whole school community for ensuring the smooth running of the school during lockdown. The phased return for all children has been welcomed by parents.

Action: Staff Governor to pass on LGB congratulations and thanks to all school colleagues for their dedication and hard work

9. Executive Headteachers Update

Budget Update

The budget shared in advance of the meeting was until the end of May 2020. This budget originally projected an in-year deficit of £56,000. This prediction rose to £76,000 and has now reduced to £31,000. The expenditure during lockdown has

reduced. There has been savings on nursery provision, curriculum materials and school trips. In May there were two new income streams which now indicate the deficit this year is likely to be nearer £50,000. (£40,000 is suggested in the report) The good news is that only schools with a deficit can claim against the Covid-19 cost centre from central government so this school may be able to claim for the additional staffing to support the high numbers of children in the school.

Summer holiday provision – initial thoughts

The clubs who usually provide sports provision are still awaiting guidance from the government as to whether they can reopen. There have been announcements about summer catch-up learning in the media and the understanding is there will be regional money for the most deprived children. This is unlikely to include DCE. Summer holiday provision may be problematic for many parents.

Trustees and the core group are expecting teachers to have their summer holidays and there is a rumour there will be no expectation to remain open for KW/V children. Trustees were mindful staff worked over the Easter holidays and half term and need to be refreshed for the challenges of the autumn term.

Lord Agnew's letter 12.02.20

Paul Blackburn, the CoG at WDCE has produced a summary guide which was circulated today.

Governors noted the contents of the letter.

10. Approval Trust actions regarding the appointment of a Chief Finance Officer to the Trust and the appointment of a school business manager (SBM)

This appointment arose from the planned retirement of Jean Robinson this summer. This is a cost neutral arrangement as the school will saving money on external fees for financial advice and audit.

The SBM appointment is a promotion for an existing member of staff and this person will be supported by the CFO.

Governors noted and approved the Working Group actions on the recruitment of a School Business Manager and the appointment of a Chief Finance Officer (PT) to the Trust and to the appointment of two School Business Managers; one who is based at Didsbury CE.

S: The Executive Headteacher formally thanked the Trustees for their work in devising this way forward.

This option now gives all schools their own SBM focusing on the finances of each school and reporting to the LGB and the school leadership.

S: The CoG gave formal thanks to Matt Whitehead for his support to colleagues.

11. Elm Grove Kids Club proposal

- The Elm Grove Kids Club Charity asked the school to take over this provision. They had approached the school in 2017 and the Trust gave tacit approval at that time. Elm Grove want to wind up as an independent charity and proposed a merger with the SJE Trust. The management would fall within the school management as the provision is only for DCE children.
- PG explained the process has begun. The leads for the Kids Club are meeting with the Trust leadership to discuss TUPE arrangements and the transfer of assets. They did have a healthy balance prior to lockdown and this needs to be reviewed. The proposal is, to honour the original decision to take over the Kids Club and give

approval for the Executive Headteacher; the HoS and the CoG leeway to negotiate on behalf of the LGB. It was noted this is company is financially viable and many staff are already school staff who would just need dual contracts. There had been an issue recruiting volunteers to sit on the management board. This provision provides high quality wrap around care and will provide an income stream for the school.

- The Charity Trustees have requested, and it was agreed that any money transferred is restricted for the development of the service.

Governors formally ratified the original intent of 14 June 2017 agreed by Trustees to support the transfer of EGKC into the Trust. Governors supported the Trustee decision to form a working group to explore this further and begin discussion with the EGKC. The working group will include Matt Whitehead; Simon Ball; and Paul Good

12. Minutes of the meeting held 28th January 2020

The minutes of the meeting held 28th January 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising from this meeting.

13. Terms of Office of Governors

- Mark Vermes; Andrew Ballantyne and Sylvia Bradley indicated they wished to stand down at the end of their current terms of office. The chair gave formal thanks to the three governors who are retiring from the LGB.
- Trustees met on the 10th of June and approved the following appointments:
 - Paul Good was reaffirmed as chair of this LGB, and term of office is extended until 05.02.24.
 - Trustees approved the appointment of Matthew Lee (presently an elected parent governor until 31.08.20) as a foundation governor at Didsbury CE term of office to run for four years from 01.09.2020.
 - Catriona Arundale and Helen Stallard were reaffirmed as a foundation Governors until 12.09.24

Action: School to hold parent election in September 2020.

14. Proposed Dates of future meetings

Governors agreed to meet on Thursday 16th July at 7.30pm (remote meeting)

Governors discussed holding some future meetings remotely and the benefits were outlined including environmental benefits from not travelling and the time saved.

Dates of 2020/21 meetings

Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7.30pm

Tuesday 17th November 2020 at 7.30pm

Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 7.30pm – proposed remote meeting

Tuesday 9th March 2021 at 7.30pm

Tuesday 27th April 2021 at 7.30pm

Tuesday 29th June 2021 at 3.30 (meet the children)

15. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer from St. Columba was led by Nick Bundock

Signed..... Date.....

Mr Paul Good (Chair)

Meeting closed at 20:50

Summary of actions

- Action: School staff to pass onto LGB congratulations to all school colleagues
- Action: School to hold parent election in September 2020.