



**Didsbury CofE
Local Governing Body REMOTE Meeting
Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7.30pm
Draft Minutes**

Present:

Catriona Arundale	Foundation Governor
Simon Ball	Head of School
Nick Bundock	Foundation Governor
Kate Catling	Parent Governor
Paul Good	Chair (MDBE)
Emma Hooson	Staff Governor
Abbie East	Foundation Governor
Matthew Lee	Co-opted Governor
Philip Robinson	Parent Governor
Helen Stallard	Foundation Governor
Joyce Thom	Foundation Governor
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

In attendance

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Emilie Smith	SENDCO

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, Introductions and Apologies for absence

- Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Paul Good. New governors Abbie East; Kare Catling; and Joyce Thom were welcomed to their first meeting.
- The opening prayer was led by Nick Bundock.

2. Apologies for Absence

All Governors were present.

3. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interest

- Catriona Arundale; Helen Stallard; and Phillip Robinson, Kate Catling, Abbie East, Matt Lee 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.

4. SEND update

- Emilie Smith reported on the SEND needs in the school and had shared two reports in advance of the meeting. There are 238 pupils on roll at DCE of which 18 children receive SEND support. This is 7.6% of the school population which is lower than the national average of 12.8% for Primary schools. There are less children with lower level need.
- Nine pupils have EHC plans (education, health and care) and this represents 3.8% which is higher than the national average of 1.8%. DCE has more pupils with pupils with high level needs. One EHC plan application is in process. There are 27 pupils in total with SEND needs which is 11% of the school population.

Categories of need

- There are seven children with communication and interaction needs. Nine children have cognition and learning needs and this is the highest area of need. Historically has been the highest area of need. Eight children have social emotional and mental health needs and this has been rising in recent years. Three children have sensory or physical needs.
- Yr5 is the class with the highest level of need, eight children including three children with EHC plans. This is 27.6% of the year group. There are traditionally fewer children identified in younger age groups due to the time needed for development and assessment.

Vulnerable groups

- 7.6% of the school population are PP (pupil premium). Five children are PP and SEND (18.5%) which is higher than the general school population. Class teachers are aware of the children who are receiving PP funding. 18% of the school population are EAL (have English as an additional language) and 12 pupils on SEND register are EAL children (55.6%). 37% of school population have Summer birthdays and 15 children (56%) are SEND and have summer birthday. These children are checked they are developmentally behind and no chronologically younger.

Support provided

- There are six children with behaviour support plans, one child with a RA (risk assessment), and no child on a reduced timetable. One child has a transition timetable due to the lockdown period. At half term this child will attend full time.
- There are two children with an EHC plan who receive full time funding, the other seven children only have part time funding and the school plugs the gap for some children. Six children have EP (educational psychology) support; four children have SALT (speech and language therapy) and five children are with CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services) and one child is receiving pastoral interventions. The TA is working with one-year group each half term due to the bubble arrangements.
- Four children with SEND needs joined the school in the Autumn term and two had an EHC plan, and five children with SEND needs left in the summer term for secondary school.

S: The chair noted the school has twice the national average of children with EHC plans, this might also reflect the skills and work from Emilie in identifying need. Formal thanks were given to Emilie Smith for making the path smooth for parents and for all the work done for the children.

Q: What is the impact of marking 'cognition and learning' and 'social, emotional and mental health' as priorities?

- The support provided depends on the needs of the child and the interventions purchased are what will support the most children. Every child has a provision plan which focuses on the main area of need.

C: There is significant need in the Yr5 class and your work involves supporting families, does the teacher also receive support?

Adults in the classroom will support more than one pupil to avoid classes being overwhelmed with adults. The Yr5 team are experienced and work well with outside agencies and the support staff have worked with the children previously.

Q: What is the risk assessment category?

A risk assessment could be needed for a child who poses risk to themselves or others, such as for absconding, climbing. The RA will sit with the behaviour support plan. Children with a behaviour support plan might have a de-escalation plan.

Parental Questionnaire

- The questionnaire was administered in July 2020. The categories of responses were explained. There were 13 responses out of 18 (46%). Next year the aim is to increase this response rate. Each year the responses are increases.
- 92% of parents felt children are supported well at DCE. 100% agreed parents could access the class teacher to discuss needs. 77% of parents agreed children could engage in all school activities, the other three parents were unsure. Parents might not be aware of what the school provides. 100% of respondents indicated their child was happy at school.
- In relation to the lockdown questions, 85% of respondents felt their child was well supported and 85% were able to contact the teacher when needed. One response was not sure and one strongly disagreed.
- The comments were separated into strengths and areas of development. Comments were optional. Strength includes support from the SENDCO. Areas of development included support during lockdown was felt to be not as evident, the school finds this feedback useful to identify actions. Actions are usually devised when more than one parent disagrees with statements, this time the school could identify from the comments and these parents attended a meeting to discuss improving communication. This was a positive meeting and it transpired there has been a letter missed.

S: Governors noted Emilie Smith is professional and pro-active in following up issues.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting held 24th June 2020 & matters arising

Governors formally approved the minutes of the meeting held 24th June 2020 as a true record.

Action: School staff to pass onto LGB congratulations to all school colleagues. It **Was** explained the school had high intake of Yr 6s and good transition work. This has been actioned.

Action: School to hold parent election in September 2020. This has been actioned and Kate Catling is the new parent Governor.

Matters Arising

Paul Good wrote to all Governors who retired at the last meeting, some of who had worked with the school over many years.

6. Head of School Report

Simon Ball reported there has been minimal change in staffing, mainly role changes. Jo Sproson is now the SBM (school business manager) replacing Jean Robinson. An extra admin assistant has been employed to back fill.

DCE Kids Club, was a charity and is now part of the school, meaning the school now has 48 employees in total. Many Kids Club staff already work for the school in other roles.

Subject leadership has changed and this was detailed in the report.

Covid Risk Assessment and safety protocols update

- The RA is working well. Staff training for Covid included the Kids Club staff. There has been ongoing monitoring and tweaks to the RA. The RA is robust and working well. The school has managed to contract the staggered starts and end of day to just 15 minutes.

Admissions update and numbers of children in school

- Yrs1 to Yr6 have approximately 94% attendance. The leadership are pleased all reception children were in school by the 7th September and there was full attendance of all nursery children from the 14th September.
- The Admissions Policy was changed slightly to reflect the church not being fully open. A recent admissions sub-committee has met to agree some more substantive changes which will be consulted upon, the proposal is children will be expected to accompany parents and grandparents to church. This will bring the DCE policy in line with the WDCE Admissions Policy. The consultation will occur in December 2020 and January 2021 for changes in 2022. The chair explained the admission arrangements changed in response to church closures in collaboration with all relevant organisations. The school adjudicator advice is being followed.

Plans for “catch-up” and remote learning plans (if needed)

- The concept of catch-up assumes lost learning. Some children were out of school for 17 weeks and this cannot be replicated at home. £80 per child has been allocated by the government which equates to a £17,000 one off grant for this academic year only. Schools can spend this how they want and DCE will employ an additional TA (teaching assistant). The appointment has been made. Yr6 have the most pressing need as they have SATs tests in 130 days.
- Remote learning plans might be needed for a child isolating having tested positive or waiting for a Covid test result. Work is on the school website. The Government requires schools to have a robust digital platform by the end of September. The school will be using Google Classroom which enables children to upload their work. The Trust is not providing live online lessons due to many reasons. This platform will be used if any bubbles are sent home.
- Not all children have devices for home use but the school can support families with some devices or printed copies of work.

Q: The hope is the digital platform is not needed, are there any plans to prepare the children with Google Classrooms in case they are needing to isolate?

Google Classroom needs access to the school MIS (management information system) to remove the names of children. When staff are fully trained, the intention is for children to familiarise with this platform by using this for homework. The school plans for this to be a feature for older children for some of the time.

S: Parent governors were impressed with school arrangements for home learning.

Q: Are there any increased pastoral needs, are children more concerned about bereavements?

One of the strengths of this school was the high attendance during the lockdown period. 60% of the children were back in school in the summer term and this allowed the children to work through pastoral issues. This has remained high on the agenda, and PSHE (personal social health and economic education) focuses on mental health issues. The children are proving to be resilient. The school uses CPOMs (child protection online monitoring system) and if a child was worrying excessively this would be noted and the school would work closely with parents. The academic catch-up will not diminish the holistic approach taken.

S: Governors noted attendance is 94% across the school with some classes higher than this. The Manchester average is 82% and the national average is 88%. Formal thanks were given to Simon Ball and colleagues for their hard work in maintaining excellent attendance.

2019-20 Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

- Simon Ball shared the SEF on screen and explained the purpose of the SEF. Throughout the year the school works through SIP (school improvement plan) objectives and strives to make the schools better. The SEF identifies judgements against national criteria identified by Ofsted. Actions in red indicate actions which occurred during the Covid lockdown (the school was still open). Some actions carry on into the new academic year such as fostering a love of reading. The school is judged outstanding in Personal Development; Quality of Education; Behaviour and Attitudes. EYFS (early years foundation stage) is on a journey and this is now evaluated as outstanding. The school meets with the SIP partner, who is an HMI inspector who corroborates the judgements.
- Governance is included in the leadership and management judgement and any inspection will look at Governor contribution to the school success. The school has not been inspected since 2008 due to its constant outstanding judgements but an inspection is now due.

2020-21 School Improvement Plan (SIP) Summary

- The school priorities were shared on screen. Staff meetings are aligned with the school priorities.

C: A key priority is keeping a broad and balanced curriculum, is this a challenge with the Yr6 SATS priorities?

As well as the Christian ethos of the school, this school is dedicated to a broad and balanced curriculum and staff and parents support this. This school has been the highest performing school in Manchester for the last few years and this is with a broad and balanced curriculum. Maths and English concepts are taught through the wider curriculum. The children are constantly practicing Maths and English skills across the curriculum. The school Enterprise Week gives opportunities for wider learning. The residential week is still in the **planning as we look to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum.**

Q: One of the priorities is the accreditation for the Global Neighbours Bronze Award, what is this?

This requires the children to think of the needs of other people. This scheme is run by **Christian** Aid and the children work to improve the lives of global neighbours. This schools works with the Potters **V**illage project in **K**isoro. The children raise money; learn about advocacy, and much of this is delivered via the History/**RE/PSHE** curriculum. This is not an expensive programme. The school is nearly ready to apply

for the silver award.

2020-2022 subject lead reporting cycle

- Staff Governor Emma Hooson, reported she has secured 34,000 euros to fund a modern foreign languages programme. This is a three-year project secured by Erasmus just before Brexit. The programme is spreading Spanish around the school.
- Emma Hooson volunteered to present to Governors. All the subject areas will be reported on a two-year cycle.

Parent Questionnaire

- The parent questionnaire uses questions from Ofsted, there were 146 responses from 235 children. Parents are issued with one questionnaire per child. Two years ago, the paper responses were 78, so these online responses show a great increase. The format of some of the questions may lead to misleading answers but the overall responses is **very** pleasing.
- Parents were not as positive about children taking part in activities after school and this **is due to** the lack of space in this building. There are some clubs in school but the hall is given to the after school and before school clubs. There are some sports clubs intending to start this week.
- The questions on lockdown were **very** positive. 98% of respondents would recommend the school to others. This school has high academic standards but the ethos was a factor identified frequently by parents as a strength. Home learning was identified as area for improvement and this is being addressed.

7. Behaviour and safety of pupils (Safeguarding) – update

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2020) governors to sign to say that they have read and understood this document on Gov Hub.

The clerk confirmed all but two governors have confirmed they have read this document.

Safeguarding

- Simon Ball explained the agenda the school has to follow in relation to Safeguarding. The SCR (single central register) is checked by the Executive Headteacher and children's views are canvassed about safety issues.
- 48 Staff have completed online training updates.
- There are no LACs (looked after children) in the school, there are seven previously LACs (**including** adopted children). There was one CME (child missing in education) but the LA are now satisfied the child is in education elsewhere so this can be removed from DCE records. It was explained often a CME occurs when a child attends another school, or relocates and the records have not fully changed over. A child cannot be removed until the forwarding schools receives the records. If a child is vulnerable the LA are involved.
- There are 30 vulnerable children in the school. One child has been referred to social care. If the school has safeguarding concerns, they contact the multi-agency safeguarding hub where social workers can give advice.
- If a child has 10% absence this is known as PA (persistently absent). DCE last year had 4% of pupils who were PA, the national average is 8%.
- There have been no fixed term exclusions to report to Governors.
- One child is receiving Early Help (low level intervention). There was one example of

bullying brought to the attention of staff and this is being closely monitored.

- There were no questions on this report.

8. Executive Headteacher updates

Matt Whitehead shared blessings with the GB (governing body).

- The children are delighted to be back in school
- The pastoral support is excellent, children are supporting each other and glad to be back with their friends
- The Covid-19 RA is working well
- The GB has new vibrant members
- The parent questionnaire suggests since home learning, parents are more thankful of the efforts of the school
- The school team has worked together during great adversity and given beyond and above and worked throughout the lockdown period.

Finance update

- The budget shared is from the 1st September 2019 to the 31st August 2020. The predictions were for a shortfall, but there was more income than predicted, and staff costs were less than projections. When St. Elisabeths joined the Trust some staff costs were split between four schools making a saving.
- The YTD (year to date) for September 2020, shows a balanced budget. Covid saved money. There was a surplus of £13,153 with a total carry forward of approximately £150,000. This will be a tough financial year as pay rises are not being funded by the Government and the school has extra expenditure on cleaning and sanitising. There may be more staff cover costs.

Q: How has taking on Kids Club affected the finances?

Kids Club was a not-for-profit organisation and brought a healthy balance into the school accounts but this is ring fenced to be used only for the benefit of the children. There is £90,000 in the school budget which is not included in the school accounts. Kids Club should break even this year as they have lost income during lockdown. The expectation is they will enhance the school budget.

Q: Has there been a drop in numbers using kids Club due to more home working?

There might be a rise in the cost of Kids Club, the children have to remain in bubbles and this need a higher staff ratio. The hope is there is still a **positive** balance. The Kids Club manager has noticed there are more parents are using the shorter time slot which is cheaper. This may be because parents are no longer battling traffic. Staff are currently being paid until the later time and this will be reviewed in the longer term. The pension scheme for Kids Club is an improvement for the staff but is more expensive for the school and this is being monitored. (The chair suggested trading surplus is a more relevant term as this funding is designed to incorporate redundancy payments which are covered in the public sector.)

- Kids Club employees joined the trust on the 1st September and there are staff with children in other schools who are not opening their after-school provision. This school has opened and the staff have been brilliant.

S: Governors gave tribute to the fantastic staff members.

Q: Is Kids Club limited in numbers?

Yes, the size of the school building matters and the ratio of staffing is linked to the age of children. Bubbles are no bigger than 15 children. This arrangement of smaller bubbles is developing relationships much better.

9. Governing Body Matters including:

Registration on Governor Hub

The clerk confirmed most governors have completed the registration and the clerk thanked Governors for familiarising themselves with the new portal.

Completion of Pecuniary Interest Declaration on Governor Hub

All but two governors had completed the declarations

Any training (online) undertaken

Governors were asked to record any training undertaken on Governor Hub. The chair explained the training does not have to be organised through school or agencies, it is any relevant training for your role as a Governor which you may do in your workplace or voluntary work.

Link Governor roles

The chair explained Ofsted inspections will review the impact of additional expenditure for Pupil Premium grant and the Sports Premium grant.

Q: Do you need expertise in the area you are a link Governor for?

It was clarified the experts are in the school and Governors are required to have oversight and be able to challenge and support. You will develop expertise in the role and the clerk suggested accessing The Key and contacting the clerk if there are any queries.

Governor formally approved the following areas of responsibility for link Governor roles in September 2020:

Area of responsibility	Link Governor	Staff contact
Safeguarding	Paul Good	Simon Ball
SEND	Cat Arundale	Emilie Smith
Pupil Premium / Catch up funding / LAC	Kate Catling	Simon Ball
Sports and PE Premium	Matthew Lee	Kate Evans
English	Abbie East	Emma Lomas / Liz Gandee
Mathematics	Philip Robinson	Elizabeth Lugsden
Balanced Curriculum	Helen Stallard	Emma Lomas
EYFS	Emma Hooson	Liz Gandee
Health & Safety / Premises	Nick Bundock	David Robinson
Ethos & RE	Joyce Thom	Kathryn Thompson

10. Policy approval

Governor were invited to raise any questions directly with Simon Ball.

SEND Policy

Governors formally approved the SEND Policy

Pupil Premium Policy

Governors formally approved the Pupil Premium Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Governors formally approved the Whistleblowing Policy

11. Date & Times of future 2020/21 Meetings

- Tuesday 17th November 2020 at 7.30pm – remote meeting.
- Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 7.30pm
- Tuesday 9th March 2021 at 7.30pm
- Tuesday 27th April 2021 at 7.30pm
- Tuesday 29th June 2021 at 3.30 (meet the children)

12. Closing Prayer

Nick Bundock gave the closing prayer.

Signed..... Date.....
Mr Paul Good (Chair)

Meeting closed at 21:50

Summary of actions

- There were no actions from this meeting