

**Didsbury CofE
Local Governing Body REMOTE Meeting
Tuesday 17th November 2020 at 7.30pm
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	Foundation Governor
Philip Robinson	Parent Governor
Helen Stallard	Foundation Governor
Joyce Thom	Foundation Governor
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

In attendance

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Emma Lomas	Deputy Headteacher / PSHE & RE Lead
Sam Morgan	Computing and remote learning Lead

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 Opening Prayer

- Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Paul Good.
- 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. Presentations –MFL, PSHE and RSE, ICT including home learning

Sam Morgan – Remote learning

Sam Morgan explained she is the computing lead and has recently been made the remote learning lead even though this school has managed to have only one bubble closure. DCE has installed G Suite for education which is a google package and the children need to learn to use Google Classroom to enable learning from home. Parents have indicated they wanted more than Google Classroom offered and hence this installation. This will enable teachers to deliver high quality lessons in the event of a closure. All children completed homework over the holidays using the remote learning system. Governors were given a demonstration of what the nursery children would see.

E-Safety

- Online safety is now more important. The school has switched off many features in Google Classroom, the email address is used only as a login. The children can only access classwork using this email address. The weekly newsletter to families also informs parents about online safety to ensure parents are well informed. Vodaphone have created an online safety booklet which has been shared with parents. Feedback from staff was excellent regarding this resource.
- Teachers are promoting online safety and provide quick updates when using Purple Mash in class lessons. The leadership are aware of which children in the school are digitally disadvantaged children and are catered for. (Disadvantaged children are those eligible for free school meals or previously/looked after children). The school has been given one device from the DfE for these children, this school has low percentages of disadvantaged children. The school has purchased one kindle fire which is being tested, and up to five more may be bought if appropriate.
- The Executive Headteacher informed the LGB the Trust has worked hard to prepare for home learning if children have to quarantine but this cannot replicate the classroom experience. Primary age school children also are very young to be undertaking screen-based learning, much of their learning is kinaesthetic and group based. Practical learning cannot be done online. It is also hard to know how much homework is needed and how much online learning is appropriate, as feedback from parents varies. Many parents are also working from home and not available to support children who might be quarantined.

Q: Are the class teachers able to have a brief session with their children on G Suite at the start of the school day with a daily focus?

Teachers are currently trying to steer away from using Google Classroom for whole class home learning as there are safeguarding issues if all children are online at once. For children undertaking home learning, there is a limit recommended of four pieces of work per day including one Maths assignment, one English assignment and two others. These are uploaded daily. Teachers are steering away from live lessons but do provide some pre-recorded lessons which can be accessed as appropriate. The learning is the priority but the school is flexible about when this takes place.

S: Governors noted online learning has to be something different and cannot replicate the classroom. Governors noted voice overs are helpful and feedback has been quick from staff which does motivate the children.

S: Governors were pleased to hear the school is addressing digital disadvantage.

The HoS (Head of School) explained the DfE promised devices for disadvantaged children. Originally the FSM (free school meal) allocation registered was for five devices. This was reduced to one device after half term. The school then ordered this free one, the order was not processed and by the time this was sorted the children were back in school.

Formal thanks were given to Sam Morgan for an excellent presentation.

Emma Lomas - PHSE & RE lead

- The presentation was an update from the previous presentation. This school was using the scheme Jigsaw and the assessment sheets proved to be onerous so these have been redesigned. Self-assessment occurs with teacher guidance and the reflection process is now working well. These are completed each half term and this addresses the first action.
- The second action for the school related to SRE (sex and relationship education) which was due to start in September 2020 but the DfE has delayed this until summer 2021 due to the pandemic.
- The third action was to ensure the Jigsaw scheme meets the new curriculum. PHSE is now a statutory curriculum requirement and DCE have also prioritised this subject. DCE curriculum is covering the DfE scheme and the objectives are being checked. Basic first aid is an example of a new requirement and this school offers this but will now look at offering this in Yr5 as well as Yr6.
- RSE is not compulsory but it is advised to teach this and it is good practice to prepare children for secondary school. Schools are expected to design their own curriculum. The RSE strand will be personalised for the school.
- The school closure meant PHSE became vital for providing well-being activities. As children returned to school Jigsaw have provided additional lessons to respond to the lockdown. Some of the usual lessons have been replaced, there are also some extra lessons depending on the needs of the class. Some issues are for individual children such as loss and bereavement and some issues are for class-based learning. This has been positive and this scheme can be tailored. Adaptation and resilience are the skills being developed as well as preparing the children for potential future lockdowns.
- The REST (resilience and engagement scale and toolkit) scheme was explained. Some children have found returning to school hard. REST is a resource for teachers to use with children to develop resilience. This scheme deals with mature topics and enables teachers to support children better and have more targeted conversations. Modelling of behaviour is occurring and the language from adults is consistent. The next INSET day will involve staff training on the REST scale as part of the mental health training.
- The RSE curriculum has to be ready for 2021 and the Jigsaw scheme has a RSE strand called "Changing Me". Teachers have looked at their own lessons and adapted this to their cohort. There are many companies selling schemes of work. Manchester Healthy Schools have released a scheme last week and this will be reviewed. FGM (female genital mutilation) and forced marriage is important for many Manchester schools and those schools might need more direct teaching on those topics. The final RSE curriculum will involve consultation with Governors and families and this might have to be undertaken remotely. This might be done using a questionnaire.

S: Parent Governors noted they were impressed with the PHSE curriculum.

C: is there any support given to teachers who are also affected by the pandemic. Has ACES (adverse childhood experiences) trauma informed responses practices been discussed by staff?

Staff mental health and well-being, staff are surveyed annually and this has been positive and staff morale in this school is high. There are individual concerns and anxieties around Covid and leadership are supportive and the RA (risk assessment) is renewed every half term. Staff were keen to return to school after the lockdown. Other schools have more issues with staff being anxious. The Executive Headteacher and the HoS do listen to staff.

The HoS informed the GB the school had to consult and agree the RA with trade unions or a staff member. DCE had a staff member shielding all through the lockdown so she was the staff representative who worked with the HoS on the risk assessment. Staff do approach the staff representative directly for reassurances and to identify changes needed. The RA is fluid and responsive. There was a staff meeting held in school but staff preferred to resume online meetings. There is a Trust wide mental health group which met before the pandemic and this will start again in each school.

All staff have had training on Adverse Childhood Experiences ACES.

Q: Is there any direct response from the children about online learning (Pupil voice)?

Circle time allows the children to talk about their issues. Pupil Voice will be undertaken after Christmas and there will be questions on the new learning from the Jigsaw scheme. The children seem to be engaged and enjoying PHSE. The HoS recommended a TED talk which explained how the more adverse childhood experiences related to more difficulties as an adult.

S: Governors were reassured staff morale is high as anecdotally governors were aware many schools have staff struggling.

This school allows children to eat in the hall which gives staff a full hour to recharge, other schools are having to keep the children in the classroom all day. DCE does have dedicated experienced teachers.

S: Governors welcomed the trauma training for children and felt this was very valuable.

Formal thanks were given to Emma Lomas for a clear presentation.

Emma Hooson – MFL

- Emma Hooson informed the committee she is undertaking middle leaders training which required her to develop a subject area so she chose MFL as she was the only Spanish teacher. The aim is for the class teacher to develop confidence to teach Spanish and this became a CPD opportunity for staff. There are now schemes of work which support staff and resources provided. Erasmus funding from the EU was secured to support this development.
- On 10th November the school has been awarded 34,000 Euros which is paid in stages. This is normally a two-year project, which has been expanded over three years due to the pandemic. This project has to end by the end of December 2023 when Emma Hooson will submit a report detailing the impact of the funding and progress made.
- ClaroGB is the company providing the training using this funding and there will be a week-long course in Santander. The training will involve time in Spanish primary schools. In Spain children start learning English at nursery age. The training is open to all staff. There is funding for 14 participants which was the number of staff interested at the application stage. The training for staff was outlined and opportunities to immerse in the language when in Spain. ClaroGB supported the school with the application process and will help with the report detailing progress. The trips to Spain for training can be at different times.

Formal thanks were given to Emma Hooson and congratulations were given for the successful bid enabling colleagues to develop their skills.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting held 6th October 2020 & matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held 6th October 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

There were no actions or matters arising from this meeting.

6. Head of School Report

Covid update

- Three staff tested positive and these were not class-based staff so were able to work from home. One child tested positive and Yr5 only had to quarantine for one week before half term.
- This school has two staff members who are clinically vulnerable and were advised to not come into work. One staff member wanted to return to work and the school has been able to accommodate this by providing a full-length screen.

Staffing issues update

- The report detailed the current staffing structure. The school is still employing new staff to ensure the children can remain in their bubbles.

Pupil attendance

- The school has over 97% attendance. Self-isolating children are not counted in these figures. Punctuality has also increased and parents were commended for supporting the school with the arrangements.
Formal congratulations were given to Yr5 for only needed one week for quarantining as this was before half term.

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

- The Executive Headteacher is in this school at least once a week undertaking aspects of safeguarding review including talking to children. The SCR (single central register) is checked. This school has 50 members of staff each with a HR file, procedures are being streamlined to ensure full compliance with all records required.
- Vulnerable pupils are monitored closely. All incidents are logged along with follow up actions. The school does not have many referrals regarding safeguarding issues.
- It was explained for the benefit of new Governors, the DfE want to know data about children attending less than 90% and this is known as PA (persistent absence). This school only has 10 children (5%) which is very low. The national average is 8%. As the school year progresses the PA tends to drop. Last year this school only had eight children who were PA and this tends to be for holidays in term time which has not happened this year.

8. Executive Headteacher updates

Finance Update

- The Executive Headteacher explained the budget process and explained most of the financial responsibilities sit with Trustees. DCE school income was forecast at £1,454,945 and projected staff costs were £1,118,719 and non-staff costs were £299,333 which meant a projected surplus forecast of £36,893.
- Over the summer period the school had TUPE'd {transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)} the Kids Club into the Trust. This will have an impact on the DCE budget both in terms of income and expenditure. The January revision of the budget will include all adjustments. The YTD (year to date) of two months are positive.
- There is a £64,140 current in year surplus, however £90,000 was transferred from Kids Club. The school would have been running at a deficit if it was not for the Kids Club £90,000 income. Staff costs are currently amber and may change to red.
- There is a large income stream this month and the school has not received all LA income due.

Q: Has the DfE grant for the pay award been received and does this cover the costs of the pay award?

No, it has not been received and the pay award does not cover costs. The pay award was 2.75% for support staff. The pay award for teachers varies for each pay scale but on average this is almost 3% not funded.

- The school has experienced extra spending from Covid. Prudent budgeting means there is a substantial carry forward in DCE. Other schools in the Trust have issues from needing extra staffing for Covid. The teaching unions are alerting the government to this problem.

9. Governing Body Matters including:

The Chair asked for experiences of Governor Hub and asked if there were any training issues needed. The Executive Headteacher referred Governors to the help function.

Any training (online) undertaken

Kate Catling has attended One Education New Governor Induction training. There is future planned training for the 2nd and 9th February 2021.

The Key has training for new governors in academy trusts.

Action: MW to share details of The Key training with new Governors.

The Executive Headteacher reported the Trust is exploring whether a member of the admin team could collate all training information from the main providers as this arrives in a fragmented way.

10. Term dates 2021-22

- The HoS proposed the term dates and explained these are presented after the LA term dates are released. The School is proposing some changes compared to the MCC (Manchester City Council) dates. The LA first day of term is Monday 6th September 2021. This is later than usual as the first day back is always an INSET day. If term started on the 1st September 2021 this would give a two-day week which MCC feel is likely to have low attendance and so that is why they have suggested Monday 6th September. SECE in the Trust were also due to open on Wednesday the 1st September. If you do not start on the Wednesday these days will have to be fitted in elsewhere. DCE is not keen for this late start. To accommodate this late start the MCC end of term is later, ending on the 27th July 2022 instead of closing Friday 22nd July. The proposal for DCE is to start three days earlier on Wednesday 1st September and end on the 22nd July 2022.
- The MCC Spring half term holiday is imbalanced with a five-week term and a seven-week term. The DCE proposal is to have two half terms of six weeks so having the half term a week later than MCC. Many children in this school have siblings in Stockport schools which this suggestion dovetails with.
- Another reason for aligning with Stockport enables the INSET days to include all schools in the Trust.
- The issue of school transport and school crossing patrol is no longer an issue when deciding dates.

Governors formally approved the dates proposed for 2021/22.

11. Policy approval

Teaching statement

This policy is unchanged since the last approval.

Governors formally approved the Teaching Statement

British Values Policy

This policy is unchanged since the last approval.

Governors formally approved the British Values Policy

Behaviour Policy

This policy is unchanged since the COVID-19 update

Governors formally approved the Behaviour Policy

Admissions Policy

This policy includes new proposed criteria for the 2022-23 intake. The changes reflect the need for an alignment of the procedures of DCE and WDCE church attendance requirements. The changes only apply to faith applications and not the priority given to children who are SEND and looked after children. (There is a change from the church process who will no longer stamp the cards but this does not affect the policy). A consultation exercise will aim to be concluded by the end of January 2021. Manchester Diocese has returned the revised policy and amended to insert “when churches are open for public worship”. The policy now meets all legal requirements and is ready for wider consultation.

Governors formally adopted the Admissions Policy for the 2022/23 intake

12. Date & Times of 2020/21 Meetings

Governors discussed the option of mixed mode meetings and meeting face to face and remote meeting options.

- Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 7.30pm – remote meeting
- Tuesday 9th March 2021 at 7.30pm – expected to be a remote meeting
- Tuesday 27th April 2021 at 7.30pm
- Tuesday 29th June 2021 at 3.30 (meet the children)

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

Mr Paul Good (Chair)

Meeting closed at 21:30

Summary of actions

- Action: MW to share details of The Key training with new Governors.