

**Didsbury CofE  
Local Governing Body REMOTE Meeting  
Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm  
Minutes**

**Present:**

Simon Ball	Head of School
Kate Catling	Parent Governor
Paul Good	Chair (MDBE)
Emma Hooson	Staff Governor
Abbie East	Foundation Governor
Matthew Lee	Foundation Governor
Philip Robinson	Parent Governor
Joyce Thom	Foundation Governor
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

**Apologies**

Catriona Arundale	Foundation Governor
Nick Bundock	Foundation Governor
Helen Stallard	Foundation Governor

**In attendance**

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Liz Gandee	Reading subject lead
Emma Lomas	Writing subject 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 and Introductions**

- Governors were welcomed to the meeting by Paul Good. Simon Ball led the opening prayer.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Helen Stallard; Nick Bundock and Cat Arundale. Paul Good explained Helen Stallard has asked for apologies until the end of this academic year due to professional commitments. Governors formally endorse the approval given by Paul Good. This was agreed unanimously.

### 3. Declaration of Non/Pecuniary Interest

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

#### Reading - Liz Gandee

- English across the school has changed since the last presentation of English to Governors. Reading has been led by Liz Gandee across the whole school for just over a year. The main priority and aim is to develop a reading for pleasure and to broaden horizons. Initiatives were outlined and each class has its own library books. In KS2 each class is encouraged to read all the books in the class library before they leave that class, this is done via a reading challenge. Children are encouraged to read one book a week for pleasure. This pace and challenge is supported by a points system and the awarding of certificates. There will be a prize for the child who reads the most books over the year.
- There is an emphasis in developing comprehension skills by reading vipers. (vocabulary; inference; explanation; retrieval; and sequences / summarising). Examples were shared with Governors.
- The EYFS phonics programme was explained, all reading books are now phonics based in line with Ofsted recommendations. There have been new purchases.
- The school has purchased new books which reflect diversity.

***C: Governors were aware the book challenges at KS2 include diverse genres, are there also books reflecting diverse authors too?***

Each class teacher chooses their books, and the school uses the company 'Madeline Lindley' who recommend diverse books for the school. There are some challenging texts which take more than a week to read but also some easier books. The reading books are reviewed and changed if unpopular.

***Q: Why are phonics only books used in EYFS, what books were used before?***

The school used to have books with non-decodable words and the phonic decodable books are an Ofsted requirement. There are some tricky words included which are developed and this is in line with Government requirements. "Biff, Kip and Chip" are no longer used. This approach does work to develop early readers. Some children do move through the books faster.

#### Writing - Emma Lomas

- Since the last presentation there is a now a whole school approach for planning writing. This is more of a challenge compared to other schemes. Each half term the teacher will cover a range of genres, the teachers decide how to approach this. Emma Lomas delivered staff training focusing on how writing will be approached. Teachers have identified this approach as helpful. There is also writing across the curriculum of which a high quality is expected.
- Staff identified an area to develop was pupils being able to proof read and editing their work, this requires motivation. The January INSET covered promoting skills for proof reading to avoid common errors.
- Verbal feedback has been reviewed. The marking policy aims for impact. Written feedback on writing used to be quite detailed and staff used to also complete a checklist. Many schools are now moving towards verbal feedback (recommended by the Education Endowment Fund and Ofsted) if done effectively. The marking is now

focused on the target for the child. Verbal feedback is praise for the children in working towards or meeting their target.

- Success criteria was shared with Governors and similar symbols are used throughout the school. Children now reflect on their feedback and record this in an age specific way.
- Writing is moderated. The school will purchase some end of year exemplars of writing materials for moderation as writing can be quite subjective and teachers will benefit from this support. (These are not needed for Yr2 and Yr6).

**Q: Governors asked what 'PIE' stood for?**

Persuade, inform, and entertain. This is covered each half term.

**C: Is there any scope in exploring the spoken work and performance to develop writing skills?**

This is included in lessons. Emma Lomas delivers training in speaking and listening to trainee teachers. The whole school approach includes capturing ideas and using role play and drama. Yr4 write a play script and perform this. Poetry is encouraged to be performed.

**Q: Are there any plans to do undertake pupil voice activities on the new ways of working since lockdown?**

Yes, pupil voice will speak to children across three different classes. Pupil Voice responses are taken into account. KS2 identified they preferred their writing evidence being kept in a separate folder and this now happens. Purple polishing pens are popular with the children.

- Governors reflected from a parent perspective, and reported creative writing is a struggle so congratulated the school for their efforts.

**Q: The planning needed before writing was acknowledged, are the children employing mind mapping or is this too advanced?**

From a young age, children are encouraged to plan before writing and this is a big aspect of the learning. The writing curriculum covers many skills and the planning helps children remember this. Talk for Writing was explained to Governors. KS2 children do collect their target comments in their writing folders.

**S: Governors were complimentary about the school efforts in writing and the opportunity to visit media studios was shared. Governors noted the verbal feedback and reinforcement was excellent and this is used in other settings.**

The CoG formally thanked Miss Lomas and Mrs. Gandee for the excellent presentations and the support they have given to the Head of School as senior leaders.

**5. Minutes of Previous Meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021 & matters arising**  
**Governors formally approved the minutes of the meeting held 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**  
There were no actions from this meeting.

**6. Head of School Report:**

Update on pupil engagement & home learning update

The pupil engagement survey had 124 responses and comments were very positive. 85% of parents felt there was the right amount of home learning. Action points have been addressed. Live lessons were increased to one per day.

Staffing issues update including well-being

There is no new staffing since the last LGB meeting. There are four shielding staff, one is a teacher who has requested to return to work in the building and HR have been

consulted on the best approach to take to facilitate a safe return to school. Risk Assessments are in place.

The school had a well-being day for TAs and LSAs as a reward for their efforts during the restricted opening. The aim was to show appreciation by giving the teaching support staff a day out of the classroom, and they were replaced by the teacher.

#### Admissions update

- The admissions committee met on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and all 30 places were allocated from the 187 applications. Not all applicants who met the church attendance criteria were allocated a place but most were. Looked after children are criteria one, and many apply to DCE but may not take up the place allocated so there may be more places to allocate.
- Only 22 places of the 26 nursery places are filled. There is more emigration from the UK and changing birth rates are part of the explanation. This is a pattern across South Manchester and similar to other schools in the Trust. 2020 had a low birth rate affecting admissions in three years' time. The pandemic also might have affected nursery applications.

#### School Improvement Priorities update

The Ofsted judgement areas are the categories referred to in the SIP. This school was last inspected in 2008 so is long overdue. This is because the school remains outstanding. Each year Ofsted undertake a risk assessment of the standards, this school is checked but has remained outstanding on the data. Outstanding schools are no longer exempt so an inspection is expected. Inspections are due to occur in the summer term. The leadership are confident in the standard of education.

The priority actions in the **quality of education** were shared and fostering a love of reading is a priority. **Behaviour and attitude** include attendance which remains excellent at 97%. **Personal development** refers to the development of the children's talents and abilities. There are stand-alone criteria for **EYFS** and the actions and impact were shared. **Leadership and management** include Governance.

MFL online learning is a priority and RSE training imminent and a parental consultation is due.

#### Data update

- Schools have been advised by Ofsted to not focus on too much data and Trust schools will normally undertake three data drops each academic year. Baseline data was produced by children being assessed on the previous years learning. The data was shared and there has been less progress due to the pandemic.
- The catch-up premium was issued in November 2020 and the school employed a TA to work with class teachers with those children identified as who would most benefit. Extra sessions occurred and the children did well. Ms Morgan was working with Yr2 as they had to take the phonics test. 96% passed this test, (one child was close, and one child was disapplied). Schools can ask for children to be disapplied if the test is not appropriate for them.
- The whole school assessment in autumn 2 shows the children were doing well. Most children were on track to attain or exceed their expected standard. 140 out of 180 children are on track showing they were making recovery before the latest lockdown. The children will be assessed again before Easter. The school is pleased with the Autumn 2 assessment data.

### Catch-up premium plans

The recovery curriculum plans will change for the summer term. Miss Morgan has secured employment elsewhere so the class teacher will provide the recovery curriculum via booster classes after school. This will be done with KS2 children who have lost the most learning time.

#### **Q: Will the catch-up premium plans be shared with parents?**

The information is on the school website. The government announced the last catch-up funding in the summer term 2020 and provided the grant in November 2020. It has not been announced if there will be additional funding from this latest lockdown. The spring assessments will determine the recovery programme needed. This time, KS1 children were less able to undertake online learning so they have the most recovery needs, this will be addressed in the Summer term.

### Ofsted IDSR

- Ofsted review the IDSR (inspection data summary report) before a visit. They will review the school website and the primary IDSR. Governors will be expected to be familiar with the IDSR and this was shared. Attention was drawn to the language which indicates the school is “higher” and “significantly above” in many areas. Maths is excellent in this school. The school is in the lowest quintile for absence which is excellent. PA (persistent absence is more than 10%) is also low in this school.
- The school performs well with comparable schools. This school has low levels of deprivation. The numbers of children on FSM (free school meals) is very low. The children receiving SEND support is low compared to the national average but the school is above the national average for children with significant needs, this is children who have an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.
- There was one permanent exclusion in 2018. The in-year admissions (mobility) is close to the national average. Staff sickness levels are very low showing great dedication. The school population includes 12 out of 17 ethnic groups. The school is in the second quintile of low deprivation, this is based on the children’s postcodes.
- The finances show a negative in-year balance which relates to expenditure on the resurfaced children’s playground.
- The report covers the pupil context for 2019. The trends since then show attainment is excellent, except in 2018 at KS1. This cohort is now Yr5 and is a cohort with more need. There is much support identified for this cohort reflecting the greater need, and some of the catch-up premium has been devoted to this cohort.
- There will be no data for 2020/21. Currently, Ofsted are doing telephone catch-up to support schools and to discuss the IDSR, but are aiming for in person inspections from the Summer Term onwards.

#### **Action: School to share a printed version of the IDSR with all Governors.**

- The CoG informed the committee Governors are expected to understand the outliers and the school strategies to deal with these.

#### **Q: Is this a document available to the public?**

This is not in the public domain as there is sensitive information contained.

- As the pupil base is in the least deprived quintile, high outcomes are expected. This school is inclusive but does not have the deprivation issues impacting on attainment and progress. The school has ten children with EHC plans which is welcomed by the school community.

#### **Q: What is the additional support given for Yr5?**

The next meeting will focus on this. There is a variety of support initiatives including more TA support. There is also a SEND TA working two days per week. The spring 2 results will indicate the impact of the latest lockdown.

**Action: SB to share the anonymised Yr5 class intervention's timetables.**

The Head of School will explore the impact / progress made at the summer 2 LGB meeting. The school has to balance giving extra support to some children whilst ensuring they still receive a broad and balanced curriculum.

**The Chair thanked Mr Ball for his comprehensive report and for his management of the school during the recent lockdown**

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

There were no questions on the report which was shared in advance of the meeting. There will be no official attendance figures this year. Governors were informed the Executive Headteacher checks the single central register (SCR) which ensures all safeguarding procedures are being followed.

**8. Appointment of a well-being governor**

Kate Catling volunteered and was formally appointed as the well-being Governor.

**9. Executive Headteacher updates**

Finance Update

- The budget figures were shared in advance of the meeting and are to the end of January 2021. The DCE budget projected a £37,000 in-year surplus, plus a healthy carry forward. The YTD (year to date) figures show there is £53,000 more in the accounts and this is from the Kids Club balance of approximately £89,000 which was transferred in. The school is currently running an in-year deficit due to Covid additional expenditure.
- At this point of the financial year the school should have 42% of income and expenditure. There are extra staff costs from maintaining the bubbles in Covid. Staff costs are ideally kept at below 80% of overall income but the staff costs at DCE are increasing and likely to be over 80% this year which may need addressing to ensure that we can balance the books in years to come. Non-staff costs are less of a concern as many costs are paid up front.
- EHC plans, requiring additional support for identified children is partly funded by High Needs Funding allowance from the LA, but this does not cover the actual costs; the balance being borne by the school. This school has a higher than average percentage of SEND children costing an additional £70,000 to £80,000.
- Kids Club staff have been paid during lockdown and there have been extra cleaning costs. There has been reduced income from Kids Club this academic year. The school cannot claim additional funding from the DfE as the school has a surplus of over 4% of income. The Executive Headteacher is confident there will be a surplus carry forward again this year but that the current year will run a deficit in year. The current bubble arrangement requires additional staffing and it is unknown when this will end. Prudent budgeting over previous years means the school has a healthy budget.

**Q: Do Kids Club run at a profit usually?**

Kids Club was a profitable charity but this will be difficult to quantify, as the Trust will incur greater costs such as pension costs. Kids Club cleared about £20,000 PA. The transferred balance is for Kids Club and this has been used for extra staffing running. Kids Club has run at a loss this year, about £9,000 so far. However, there was a

healthy surplus and the safety issues are paramount this year. This academic year more parents are working from home reducing demand for the later time.

**The Executive Head was thanked for the Financial Report and was asked to convey the governors thanks to the School Business Manager and Chief Finance Officer in administering the budget.**

#### **10. GDPR – Data Protection Officer visit**

- Each of the four Heads of School are the DPO for another school. Mrs Large is the data protection officer for DCE. This is undertaken annually. The report was shared with Governors. Governors were reassured there are no compliance issues.

**Q: On the school website, is data collected from visitors (cookies), if so, is there a prompt for cookies?**

All Trust websites are maintained by “e4education” and it was assumed no information is collected. There is no request to accept cookies.

**Action: MW will check with ‘e4education’ there is no data collected from the schools’ websites.**

#### **11. Governing Body Matters including:**

Any training (online) undertaken

Joyce Thom has undertaken online training in Growing Faith in Children run by Manchester Diocese. This was highly recommended.

Link Governor Report

There were no reports for this meeting due to remote learning requirements.

#### **12. Policy approval**

Governors were informed these policies are on a three yearly cycle but will be reviewed sooner if needed.

Risk Assessments Policy

This policy has been updated, there were no significant changes.

**Governors formally approved the Risk Assessments Policy**

Online Safety Policy

**Governors formally approved the Online Safety Policy**

Anti-Bullying Policy

**Governors formally approved the Anti-Bullying Policy**

Admissions Policy

This policy has changed to align with Diocesan advice and guidance.

**Governors formally ratified the decision of the Admissions Committee to accept the Admissions Policy**

Positive Handling Policy

This policy relates to staff working with children at risk.

**Governors formally approved the Positive Handling Policy**

**13. Date & Times of 2020/21 Meetings**

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.30pm

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 3.30 (meet the children)

**14. Closing Prayer**

Paul Good led the closing prayer.

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

*Meeting closed at 21:50*

***Summary of actions***

- Action: School to share a printed version of the ISDR with all Governors.
- Action: SB to share the anonymised Yr5 class intervention's timetables.
- Action: MW will check with 'e4education' there is no data collected from the schools' websites.