

**Hoyle Court Primary School Governing Board
Minutes of the Full Board Meeting
Held on 06 May 2020**

The meeting commenced at 6:40pm.

Present: Val Shered (Chair), Judy Walton (JW), Simon Kemp (SK), Tim Phillips (Head), Adrian Metcalfe (AM), David Pike (DP), Roger L'Amie (RL), Liz Will (LW)

In Attendance: Nageena Khan - Clerk to Governors, Nancy Tordoff- School Business Manager (NT)

Welcome and Introductions

Chair introduced the meeting and welcomed all.

61/19 Apologies for Absence and their Acceptance

Apologies were received from Ros Sheridan, these were accepted. The meeting was quorate.

62/19 Any Other Business and requests for Agenda order variations

None.

63/19 Declarations of Interest for Items on this Agenda

DP declared an interest as Regional Officer for the NEU.

64/19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting; EFGB 11 March 2020, FGB 12 March 2020

EFGB 11.03.20- Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, proposed by AM, seconded by DP. A copy was signed and dated.

FGB 12.03.20- Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, proposed by Chair, seconded by DP. A copy was signed and dated.

65/19 Matters Arising from these Minutes not covered by the agenda

- Holiday Schedule- BD informed that a number of families have had holidays cancelled and have asked for holiday dates for 2021/22. Head reported that the school is banking five training days and is proposing for children to have a two-week half term holiday during Spring Bank. He sent an email out to all parents seeking their views and received a number of replies supporting the proposal.
- Weekly diary Dates- Head to include governors in these.

The following actions will be carried over to a future meeting:

- Succession planning for Chair/Vice Chair
- External review of governance
- Governor appointment
- Health and safety and disaster recovery

66/19 Governor Vacancies and Appointments- Two Co-opted Vacancies

Although there are candidates interested in the roles, it would not be ideal to start their Term of Office during school closure and have their first meeting using a virtual platform. **Therefore, it was agreed to invite them to the first Full Board meeting in the autumn term 2020 after which they can be appointed.**

67/19 Correspondence

DfE, LA and Public Health guidance has been regularly received.

68/19 Committee Reports Since the Last Meeting- Finance and General Purposes 01 May 2020

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*Head,
Chair,
Clerk*

*Chair/
Head*

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NT reported that the Carry Forward is £65k; she examined the budget in detail and the figures are accurate. At the F&GP Committee meeting the following expenditure was agreed:

- One-off payment for furniture
- School to school support and additional consultancy costs
- Boiler replacement via a Saalex loan. Parkside Facilities to support NT with quotes.

This increased expenditure by £5k in total, bringing the Carry Forward down to £60k and resulting in a slight deficit by the third year.

Staffing will be reviewed from September 2020 once the Deputy Head is in place.

Q: JW- would you say that there are even more unknowns than usual due to the circumstances we are in. have you presented the worst case scenario?

NT replied yes. Head added that many decisions by the DfE have been delayed due to Covid-19.

Q: RL- are future budgets tentative? We do not know what conditions will be like when school opens.

NT explained that the budget presented is the worst case scenario based on a number of flexible figures.

Kitchen Roof- this collapsed and has been repaired. The school paid the electrical contractor £80, however no invoice for the other work has been received.

The budget was approved.

NT

Health and Safety- Head reported that in the last few days there has been a lot of communication with staff regarding the current situation and how this will affect them when returning to school. The Government are expected to make an education announcement on Sunday regarding next half term.

Some members of staff have raised concerns regarding the challenges that some pupils present and have asked for more adults to join the teams in school, therefore Head has reworked the schedule so that 5.5 adults are in school per day rather than 4. After Sunday, if schools are expected to reopen plans will need to be carefully considered. DP highlighted that ongoing dialogue with staff is vital during this period and he felt reassured that this is happening. Head reported that staff members have been very supportive and flexible, however their safety or good will cannot be taken for granted.

Q: SK- it would be really useful to ensure that we get some buy in from parents on what happens particularly when school starts again. Evidence from Germany and Denmark has been that some parents have been quite reluctant to send children back as they don't feel it is safe. It would be good to get a sense of what the science is really saying. Unions will be hugely useful in this process. have you considered involving them?

Chair recalled that Ros Sheridan mentioned the concerns from parents at the last F&GP Committee meeting regarding sending their children back to school. It is important to ask pupils or parents if everyone is well at home when they drop off and collect their child. DP raised that school staff members have passed away due to Covid-19 across the country so a reopening needs to be carefully approached.

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Protecting Vulnerable Staff- Head informed that if the school moves towards a partial reopening not as many staff members will be required and vulnerable staff members will not be asked to return.

Q: AM- when schools open there will be a group of children that will not return so have you considered some sort of distant learning continuing for them?

Head replied that Sunday’s announcement will be a crucial one for all schools, it is expected that a considerable amount of information will be received. He is meeting with SLT virtually next week to discuss plans based on any announcements and it is essential that the school adheres to the law, statutory guidance and safeguarding etc. and have a plan that is fair and transparent.

In a recent BBC poll where 2000 parents were polled, 40% stated that they would not be returning their children to school regardless of government advice, therefore transparency and clarity is key and a plan need to be put together very carefully.

Q: SK- can you put something on the website that encapsulates what we have been talking about?

There was discussion around this. It was agreed for Head to send a statement to parents before Sunday that plans are being put together and he will provide them with further information in due course.

It was agreed for governors to meet again on Thursday 14 May at 6pm for a single item agenda.

Head to email parents with an update tomorrow.

SENCo Role- the closing date for applications is tomorrow and so far ten applications have been received. This is a large number given that it is a part-time position and there is a very strong field of applicants.

Chair explained that given the nature of the application process and interview process and not being able to observe the candidate’s interaction with children, at the F&GP Committee it was agreed to implement the current policy of a probation period of six months. The committee did share some concerns on this. Head informed that Alison Ungondy who is the LA SEN Advisor has promoted the role and this could be the reason for the late rush of applicants. Head has had discussions with Alison and with the PPSM regarding the possible tasks.

The interview panel will consist of Head, Chair and Deputy Head. Due to the difficulty in having the interviews remotely it was suggested for the three members of the panel and candidate to come into school for interviews in a socially distanced setting. This would allow panel members to see how they interact with children. Chair explained that the requirement for the SENDCo award was removed from the essential and desirable criteria, however it was agreed that the successful candidate has to have the right level of experience.

DP raised concerns about holding interviews in school following social distancing guidelines and it could lead to potential complaints of an unfair interview process if someone did not want to have the interview in school. Head thought that this was a good point for consideration.

Q: SK- is it normal for contractual agreements to have a six-month probationary period?

Chair informed that this has been used before.

Govs

Head

Signed.....

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NT also raised the point that if the successful candidate does not have the SENCo qualification and the school pays for this, it will wipe out the training budget for the year.

69/19 Headteacher's Report (previously circulated)

Governors thanked Head for the superb reports to keep them updated on the ever changing environment.

Staffing and Premises- Head informed that plans are changing on a day by day basis following daily DfE and LA updates. The LA has been very supportive alongside local colleagues.

Q: DP- did the message from governors get passed onto staff?

BD informed that it did, he read this in an email to all staff members. Head reported that the systems are working well because staff are flexible and understand the importance of working collectively on this. The team is pulling together really well during a very difficult situation.

BD reported that the Hoyle Court video with staff members sharing a key message was released similar to the NHS one. Chair saw the video and thought that it was fantastic.

Pupil Assessments- The school spent two fantastic days working on this and the new assessment system OTrack has proved to be value for money due to the time saved analysing data. Staff members worked hard in the very final week before lockdown to make sure that the end of term school data for the spring term was collated to allow a snapshot of where the whole school was for RWM right up until the point of closure. Head proposed to present some of the reports and graphs available on OTrack at a future meeting.

Q: Chair- does the software provide the answers you expected or has it thrown up more questions?

Head highlighted that the accuracy of the information inputted is key; there are some anomalous figures, however the software allows the opportunity to drill down into very specific groups of children that teachers would not have been able to focus on before.

Q: V- does it produce Venn diagrams?

Head replied yes, there is also the facility with all reports to completely anonymise data. The diagrams save a Signiant amount of time allowing teachers to be able to identify children that require additional support and look at the appropriate support to put in place.

Q: Head- do people find Venn diagrams useful?

Governors found them useful, however the information is visible on other tables.

Q: AM- there are a number of three-letter acronyms and it would be useful to have key on here. What do they mean?

- WTS- working towards standard
- EXS- expected standard
- GDS- greater depth standard

70/19 Safeguarding Update- revision to policy in light of new guidance

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Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy- There is a suggested addendum to the Child Protection policy. The policy has been through the appropriate legal process. BD proposed for the section referring to secondary schools to be deleted. **Head to remove this.**

Names will be removed from the policy and instead roles will be stated.

The policy was unanimously approved subject to the amendments.

71/19 Impact of Governor Training and Visits to School

No visits have taken place since the last meeting due to the pandemic, however communication between Head and governors has been fantastic and they are aware of what is happening in school. They thanked Head for great communication.

72/19 Policy Review: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Parent Behaviour

Parent Behaviour Policy- the school has never had to use this but it is recommended to have such a policy.

Q: DP- to make the policy clearer can you be more prescriptive in the section where it states that the school has no say over what parents are doing at home? For the purposes of this policy, parental behaviour is expected in school, on trips, on school grounds, PTA meetings, home visits and anything that involves school activity, however is not exhaustive.

Home visits are rare but school does conduct them.

The policy was approved subject to the amendments; proposed by SK, seconded by LW.

73/19 Any Other Business referred from item 62/19 above

- Health and Safety visits- **DP to be involved in these.**
- Disaster recovery- **deferred to a future meeting**
- Safeguarding Visits- **these will take place when the school reopens.**
- Staffing Structure- this has moved on but will be kept on the radar.
- Pupil Roll- Head reported that it is expected for Reception to be full in September with 45 children. There was discussion regarding pupil places; AM informed that if children who have a siblings have not received a place at Hoyle Court Primary it will be due to preference given to SEN and LAC children. Head explained that Hoyle Court is a very nurturing school and does receive a higher percentage of pupils with a greater level of need. Thirteen of the children out of forty-five are siblings which is higher than usual. Normally home visits would be booked in, however due to the pandemic background work is taking place virtually and it is hoped that there will be some sort of transition.
- **Staffing Costs- DP offered to help NT carry out a benchmarking exercise in spring and this will help formulate thinking around the staffing budget.**
- **Renewal of Contracts- deferred to the next Full Board meeting.**
- **Response to the LA Review- a response will be written to the LA; Chair to keep governors updated on this.**

74/19 Date of Next Meeting- Thursday 16 July 2020 at 6:30pm

As there was no further business Chair thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 8:29pm.

Action

Head

Head

DP

*Head,
Chair,
Govs*

DP, NT

Head, NT

Chair

Signed.....

Date.....