



**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY VIRTUAL MEETING
Monday, 18th May 2020 at 6.15pm**

Participants:

Lucy Ashby	Jane Nicholls
Uel Barclay	Lydia Palmer
Alison Bateman	David Petrie
Sara Bromfield	Colin Smith
Lynda Lockyer	Dan Wells
Joe Lowther	Tanya Williams
Michèle Marcus (Chair)	
Francis Neal	Rebecca De'Ath (Clerk)

Apologies :
Claude Scott

“Cast your eyes on the Lord and he will sustain you.” (Psalm 55:22)

1. PRAYER

The Deputy Chair led the meeting in a prayer chosen to reflect today's Bible verse from Psalm 55.

2. WELCOME TO ALL AND THANK YOU

The Chair welcomed governors to this virtual meeting held via Google Meet. She wished to record her gratitude (on behalf of the full Governing Body) to the Head teacher, SLT and staff for continuing to do an amazing job in difficult circumstances. There had been fantastic feedback from parents as to how well the school had risen to the challenges posed by lockdown. School teams had also responded brilliantly over the past week to the prospect of partial re-opening in the future. The Chair had written to each member of staff at the end of last term to express her thanks, and intends to do so again.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Claude Scott was unable to attend due to technical difficulties. He had reviewed the meeting papers, and sent comments and questions to the Chair, which will be fed into the meeting at the appropriate points.

4. BUSINESS INTERESTS IN AGENDA ITEMS

There were no business interests declared.

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (23rd March 2020)

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

The actions from the previous meeting were discussed:

Item 3 (SEND and PPG Reports) – the Lead governors for SEND and PPG undertook to feed back any comments they had on the Reports, and to thank the School's Inclusion Manager for this work on behalf of governors. The Head teacher reported that, with lockdown, there was no change to the Progress and Attainment data, and the Inclusion Manager was very busy at present managing risk assessments and other requirements relating to vulnerable pupils and those with special needs.

ACTION: Joe Lowther and Tanya Williams to convey any comments and thanks to the school's Inclusion Manager.

Item 7 (Kingfisher Fund) – see Chair's Report, item 12 below.

Item 10 (Budget) – see item 8, below.

Item 11 (SFVS) – form was signed off by the Chair and sent in.

Item 12 (Governor Training) – a significant number of governors had completed online Prevent and Safeguarding courses, and the Clerk thanked them for this. The Chair recommended the 30 minute webinars that were being run by the National Governance Association.

Item 13 (Chair's Actions) – none had taken place since the last FGB meeting.

Item 14 (Admissions Policy) – see item 13, below.

7. HEAD TEACHER'S WRITTEN REPORT

The Head teacher explained that events had moved on since she had written her Report. The number of pupils attending the school had been creeping up, with 13 vulnerable and key worker children attending school today, and 18 at one point last week. This was due to the school admitting more vulnerable pupils that did not strictly meet the government's criteria, but whose situations were worsening.

Governors had viewed a copy of the letter that the Head teacher sent out earlier today to parents detailing how the school planned to re-open on June 1st. Parents would have to decide whether to send their children to school every day if they were key workers, or adopt the school's two-day approach for Nursery, Reception, Yr. 1 and Yr. 6 pupils. Years 2-5 will still be learning from home. Wellbeing Wednesdays will shortly commence, to provide activities that children could access more independently or families could work on together and to break up the week.

Other points considered by governors:

- The school's Five Year Plan – the meeting agreed that it should be called a "Strategy" to avoid confusion with the Vision. Claude Scott had commented that it was an excellent document, and had noted a few editing points which the Head teacher will make. The document will be uploaded onto the website and will be cited in a future newsletter to parents and also publicised to new parents at the start of September. Governors approved the Strategy.
- The recent whole school staff meeting had been appreciated as they had a chance to hear more about the government's announcement about school re-opening and how the school plans to respond. Another such meeting was scheduled for this week, to explore the practicalities of admitting more pupils. The emphasis was on "plans", as the picture is constantly changing. There were also smaller Phase meetings taking place, and there is a meeting planned for Assistant Teachers later this week. Governors agreed that regular communication was very important.
- Staff working split weeks work 2 days in school, have the Wellbeing Wednesday to plan, and do

the remaining 2 days working at home.

- The Chair of governors had heard from AfC that the government was planning to review the Science advice on Thursday, 28th May, which may have an impact on the re-opening of schools.
- A governor had asked whether the school's risk assessment for re-opening would be shared with governors. The Head teacher undertook to send a finalised copy to committee Chairs. It was noted that such documents could be liable to Freedom of Information requests.
- A governor had also asked whose responsibility it was to decide whether to re-open the school. This was a decision for the Head teacher, as it was an operational matter.

ACTION: Head teacher to email the Risk Assessment on re-opening the school to committee Chairs.

- The Head teacher was asked how staff might react if the Unions continued to oppose the re-opening of schools. She replied that, to date, this had not been an issue; staff were very supportive of re-opening the school.
- Asked if the school was confident in the government's medical advice, the Head teacher replied that although schools were not obliged to open, no one was a medical expert, and the advice has to be trusted. The school could make no guarantee to keep pupils at the appropriate distance from one another, however.
- Governors asked how many parents might actually send their children back to school at the beginning of June. The school had done a survey, and 60% of parents responded that they would do so. About 20% were undecided, and 20% would keep their children at home. The school was now seeking to identify exactly which pupils would attend in June.
- Governors asked about their liability should a pupil contract the virus in school. The Chair explained that NGA advice was that governors are not individually liable, as there is collective responsibility. Governors agreed that any government guidance should be followed closely where appropriate for the school.

8. FEEDBACK FROM RECENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Resources Committee

The Resources Committee Chair reported that the school had ended the 2019-20 year in a better position than forecast: there was a £17k carry-forward into next year's budget, and while this should be celebrated, it is hard to forecast the impact that Covid-19 will have on the school's finances. It was hoped that by the budget deadline of 30 June, the school would have set as good a budget as it can. The school is showing a deficit now, and while next year will see a small carry-over, subsequent years were forecast to be in deficit, and therefore in future the committee will need to look at the school's cost base.

The final budget for 2020-21 will be emailed to governors before 30 June; it is unlikely to be vastly different to figures already seen in draft.

ACTION: Resources Committee Chair to ensure that the final budget for 2020-21 is circulated to all governors for approval.

Q: Will we be able to apply for any additional funding to mitigate loss of income due to Covid-19? We have been told to keep a record of any additional expenses, but we do not know if we will receive any payment. Our income streams from the Nursery and the Kingfisher Club have been cut drastically, and we will shortly be incurring more cleaning costs.

9. WRITTEN REPORT ON MATHS

Governors agreed that Lee Reynolds had provided them with an excellent and very comprehensive brief on the subject. The Clerk was asked to minute the Governing Body's thanks to her for producing this report on top of all the other planning and preparation that she was doing. The Chair would also write to her to thank her.

Q: Is Maths a subject that lends itself easily to the current distance-learning? It depends on the topic; some areas of Maths are easier to teach online than others. Sometimes resources on-line are hard to source. We will know how successful the online learning has been when the children return to school. Staff are pleased that the majority of children are accessing online learning and are connecting with their teachers. The school chases up those that do not connect via Google Meet; those with an EHC Plan have a linked member of staff who connects with them.

10. WRITTEN REPORT FROM THE CHAPLAIN

The Governing Body gave a vote of thanks to Tom Rutter for all that he does for the school, and for his report. The Chair intends to write to him to thank him; he had been supporting staff too with their well-being.

11. GOVERNOR ONLINE TRAINING

The Chair thanked those governors who had completed online learning such as the Prevent and Safeguarding courses.

12. CHAIR'S VERBAL REPORT

Head teacher's Performance Management Appraisal

The Chair informed the meeting that the Panel had, with the Head teacher's agreement, postponed her mid-year review until they could meet up with her in person. This approach reflected advice from AfC.

Kingfisher Parental Contribution Fund

Approximately £13k had been given to the school from parents since the scheme got underway last term. The number of families contributing was lower than had been projected, and so there was scope for more families to join the scheme. It was not easy to approach parents at this time with school closure and financial hardship for some, nevertheless the school did want to approach year 6 parents to determine if they could make a one-off donation. The Head teacher will also write to parents at the end of the school year to detail how the contributions had been spent to date, and how these funds have supported online learning during lockdown. The scheme will be re-publicised in September; parents of new joiners have already been sent this information.

Pupil, Parent and Staff Questionnaires

Stakeholders had been sent questionnaires electronically. This may have had an adverse effect on the response rate, which was less than normal (when sent out via hard copy). Although the responses were still being analysed (and would be reported on fully at the next Governing Body meeting), some information was available now:

- When asked what they felt the school's response to the Covid-19 situation was, 90% of parents felt that this was well-managed.
- When staff had been asked if the school had adapted well, and whether they felt supported, 96% responded saying that they were.

Governors congratulated all staff and the school leaders for this encouraging result.

ACTION: Clerk to add this to the agenda for the meeting in July.

The Deputy Chair left the meeting at 7.56 to attend another meeting

13. POLICY REVIEW

Admissions Policy (2021)

The previous FGB meeting had debated the Admissions Panel's proposal to decrease the number of Foundation places to 6; the majority of governors had subsequently voted to retain the 12 places. The meeting had also agreed that further research be conducted into the possibility of increasing the distance criteria.

The Chair had contacted the AfC Admissions Manager and the Diocese for advice, and the school's historical admissions data had been provided for governors to view. The data on how far successful entrants lived from the school revealed that the average footprint was now more than 2km. The Chair therefore proposed that governors should vote to maintain the number of Foundation places at 12 to reflect the result at the previous meeting, but advice from AfC suggested that there was no good reason to increase the 1500m criteria. Historically, children who failed to meet the Foundation distance criteria did in fact meet the general (greater) distance criteria for open entry and were thus still able to join the school. It was suggested that governors should vote on whether to retain the status quo or not.

Governors discussed the following:

- Would those considering applying for a Foundation place be put off if they lived beyond the permitted distance? However evidence showed that these families were successful at getting a place at the school via other criteria.
- Should the option to increase the Foundation distance criteria be explored for the next few years to see if it made a difference, and then review the Admissions Policy? It was noted that the Admissions Policy was due for review in 4 years' time, and any changes would be scrutinised in the external consultation process, and would require clear evidence to support any amendments.
- Families who could not afford to live near the school could still get an open place as current evidence shows that those living 2.2km away are successful in their application.

The meeting voted on whether to retain the policy as it was: 12 Foundation places with a distance criteria of 1500m.

The majority of governors voted to accept this and retain the policy in its current form.

PE & Sports Premium Statement

This was a statutory document requiring FGB approval. Later this term it would be finalised with details of the impact that the funding had had, but this late in the year, and with the school closure, little would change.

Governors queried the figures, and it was agreed that Colin Smith would review an amended version on behalf of the governing body.

ACTION: Head teacher to ensure that a finalised version of the Statement be sent to Colin Smith for review.

Governors' Code of Conduct

While this document is signed by each governor every September, NGA advice was that governors be reminded of the content during these challenging times. The Clerk would note any changes that governors might suggest, and will seek their assent to the Code via Governorhub; there would be no need to repeat this exercise in September, therefore.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain governors' acceptance of the Code via Governorhub.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Recruitment

Asked whether the school was likely to fill its vacant positions, the Head teacher explained that a strong field of candidates had applied, and recruitment interviews were due to be held the next day.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 13th July 2020 at 6.15pm

Supporting meeting papers are electronically-filed on the GovernorHub web portal.

*The meeting closed at 20.13hrs
Attendance was 93%*

Signed:

Date:

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Item 6.	<u>SEND Report:</u> Joe Lowther and Tanya Williams to feed back comments and thanks to the school's Inclusion Manager.
Item 7.	<u>Head teacher's Report:</u> Head teacher to email the Risk Assessment on re-opening the school to committee Chairs.
Item 8.	<u>Resources Committee Feedback:</u> Resources Committee Chair to ensure that the final budget for 2020-21 is circulated to all governors in June for approval.
Item 12.	<u>Pupil, Parents & Staff Questionnaires:</u> Clerk to add this to the agenda for the July meeting.
Item 13.	<u>PE & Sports Premium Statement:</u> Head teacher to ensure that a finalised version of the Statement be sent to Colin Smith for review. <u>Governors' Code of Conduct:</u> Clerk to seek confirmation from governors that they are content with the Code.