

**West Didsbury CofE
Local Governing Body (remote) Meeting
Tuesday 24th November 2020 at 4pm
Minutes**

Present:

Paul Blackburn	Chair of WDCE GB
Felicity Bradley	PCC Governor & Parent
Paul Good	Chair of SJE Trust (MDBE)
Julia Heatley	Staff Governor
Hannah Large	Head of School
Karen Michael	PCC Governor & Parent (<i>from 16.45</i>)
Lucy Noden	PCC Governor & Parent
Zaheer Saleem	Parent Governor
Cariole Shaw	PCC Governor
Tom Studman	Foundation Governor
Matt Whitehead	Executive Headteacher

Apologies:

Anne-Marie Sarantis	Parent Governor (elected)
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In attendance:

Kathy Crotty	Clerk
Kieran Roberts	

Any text in red bold italics represents Governor question (Q); challenge (C); Governor and/or clerk support (S). Black bold upright represents decisions and actions.

1. Welcome, Opening Prayer and Apologies for Absence

- The chair welcomed Governors to the meeting. Tom Studman gave the opening prayer.
- Zaheer Saleem and Carole Shaw were welcomed to their first meeting. All Governors introduced themselves to Zaheer and Carole.

2. Declarations on non/pecuniary interests

- There are no other declarations other than those listed on the school website.
- Felicity Bradbury, Lucy Noden, Anne- Marie Sarantis, Tom Studman, and Karen Michael each have two children in the school.

3. Presentations from staff - RE & PSHE– Kieran Roberts

- Kieran Roberts reported the curriculum developments have continued during the

pandemic and these subjects have continued to be taught. There are statutory changes for SRE (sex and relationship education) in April 2021 which were due to be introduced in September 2020 but were delayed.

RE curriculum

- The main change in the RE curriculum is in the Godly Play, this scheme involves the telling of a bible story using props. Each year group undertakes Godly Play annually. This is reflective and personal for the children. One teacher in each KS will be trained but the bubble arrangements has affected this. The training is intensive and has provided good CPD for those staff who have undertaken the training.
- Altius students (trainee teachers) are involved with this and have been inducted into Questful RE and Understanding Christianity. The student teachers needed support with RE and the school ethos. The leadership have worked hard to empower all staff to be able to teach RE. The RE curriculum has maintained even during the lockdown period.

PHSE (personal, social, health, and economic education)

- Mental health and well-being was explained and the school works with Healthy Schools Manchester. There is a new scheme called “I matter” which is being piloted in the school and this is working well.
- The statutory changes make RSE (relationship and sex education) compulsory and parents have to be consulted. Teachers will explain the context of this teaching. This will be a relevant curriculum and will be in the context of relationships. SRE is compulsory, parents can withdraw from sex education but not where it relates to science.
- WDCE has attained the Healthy Schools bronze award, and the progression to silver was delayed due to Covid. There is a focus area each year and this school is focusing on RSE this year.
- There is an ethos and wider curriculum group who have continued to meet. There is an equalities award in the early stages of development and the action plan is being constructed. This school is diverse and aims to provide a curriculum that reflects this.

C: PHSE links to many other aspects of the school curriculum, how will “I Matter” tie in with other strands and the school values?

The school values are covered across the whole school curriculum. Last month the school focused on Black History Month. “I Matter” is relevant in all curriculum areas and topics can be linked back to “I Matter”. The school deals with “whitewashing” and provides the children with more relevant information about the roles of Black people and Women who are often left out of mainstream history.

Tom Studman reported on a zoom conversation with the children and the opportunity for snapshot conversations with the children and suggested others might be able to use this new media for “10-minute conversations” with the children.

Q: Within the current context, how do you envisage the consultation with parents?

The school has planned a questionnaire by email, with some online space for questions. Virtual meetings will be accommodated. Hannah Large reported she has already spoken to some families when this plan was in the national news. The school will ask parents to submit questions in advance to prepare answers. Kieran Roberts reassured governors all teaching will be age appropriate.

Q: In relation to what is being taught, will parents be shown the curriculum

materials?

Yes, this the curriculum will be shared in full. The school will share the vocabulary to be used and will work to empower parents to share information with their children.

Formal thanks were given to Kieran Roberts for his excellent presentation.

4. Approval of minutes of Previous Meeting held 29.09.20 & Matters Arising **The minutes of the meeting held 29th September 2020 were approved as an accurate record.**

Clerk to include the Safeguarding Policy for approval in Autumn 2.

See agenda item 11.

Training on Governor Hub will be offered in the new year.

5. Head of School Report including

Covid Risk Assessment and safety protocols update

This is updated as needed, the last update was half term. Some risk assessments have been updated for individual members of staff.

Admissions update and numbers of children in school

The school has 351 children out of 360 places available.

Plans for “catch-up” and remote learning plans

- Governors were informed the remote learning platform ‘Seesaw’ is working well, Microsoft Teams is not working so well. The school will be receiving support with the technology and will be linking with a school in Clitheroe. Zoom Education and Seesaw have been highly recommended. The school is happy with current provision but happy to keep updating.
- The QA officer Allan Torr shared the LA view that the most successful platform seems to be Seesaw, parent and school feedback is positive.
- The four parents were asked for their anecdotal; experiences of using the remote learning platforms. One Governor who had a child isolating for a week and praised the contact from the teacher. She reported Seesaw is an easy platform to use and she praised the school communication which was several times a day. The work submitted was marked virtually and the children receive personal message. Another Governor reported his children love using Seesaw for homework. (Governors were informed Family seesaw is a new initiative). Governors noted Seesaw is personal, unlike Teams. Seesaw seems to be appropriate for younger children. Governors also highlighted some minor inconsistencies and one family is printing to enable paper-based learning. Governors were aware some parents have been paying for printing when they do not have devices. The school will do an audit and is looking at access to devices for groups when they go into lockdown, but this is not available for homework.
- The HoS reported the government aim of remote learning being as good as classroom learning is not possible, much primary education cannot be screen based. This view has been reinforced which is pleasing.

SIP and SEF (School improvement plan and school evaluation form)

The school evaluation forms and the school improvement plan was explained. These reports are on the Governor Hub portal. Governors were invited to submit questions on these reports in advance of the next meeting.

Action: All Governors to read the SIP and SEF and submit questions to the clerk before the next meeting.

The key priorities in the SIP were shared with Governors. This is linked to the Ofsted inspection criteria. The priorities were identified under the inspection criteria headings quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development which includes diversity and inclusion; leadership and management; and EYFA (early years foundation stage). Governors were informed the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the local community. This school has a relatively young and inexperienced staff and this involves much development. The school priorities include well-being for staff and children. The school is moving staff around and the EYFS team is new and there is a new curriculum.

Q: Is there a timescale for these priorities?

The SIP priorities are to be attained by the end of the academic year. The updated SIP will be presented each term and the SEF will focus on progress made towards these priorities.

QA visit and report

The visit was from the LA, Alan Torr is the QA (quality assurance) advisor. Paul Good reported this was a helpful meeting in supporting the school. Thoughts around "IT poverty" were shared. The meeting was probing, challenging and positive. The school has been asked to audit families to ensure there are no barriers to remote learning. The broad and balanced curriculum was challenged and this is still being offered despite Covid. He asked about DT (design and technology); PE; Music and the QA provided some ideas such as having specific days for wider curriculum subjects to catch-up. These are curriculum areas that can easily overlooked but all schools in this Trust do prioritise the broad and balanced curriculum. This school is doing excellent work in MFL (modern foreign languages) and the children now have a competence in Spanish.

A video was shared which has been created for prospective parents who cannot currently visit the school. This will be included on the school website.

S: Governors were very complimentary about the content and the production of the film. The film focuses on children and the children look so happy.

Q: Have you acquired permission from parents for their children to be filmed.

The HoS confirmed permissions had been acquired.

The CoG on behalf of the GB gave formal thanks to Hannah Large and the team for the excellent work being undertaken in the school.

6. Behaviour and Safety update

- The report was shared in advance of the meeting. The SCR (single central register) is up to date and has been checked by Matt Whitehead this term.
- CPOMS (child protection and online monitoring system) was explained as the data log in system for child protection and behaviour and this can be used by all staff. Staff have different levels of access to this system.
- The online safeguarding updating training has not yet been undertaken.
- The attendance figures are very high, but if you remove the children affected by Covid this is nearer 70%. The DfE are only asking for data excluding Covid absences.

Action: HL to provide actual attendance data alongside DfE required attendance data.

7. Executive Headteacher updates

Finance Update

The Executive Headteacher reported the WDCE budget is on track. The school receives almost £2M in income and most costs are staff costs. The YTD (year to date) column shows income to date is just over £300,000. (Academy budgets run September to August). Staff costs are standard and income is on track. The non-staff costs for WDCE is in credit, but £150,000 has been lent to SWCE for some building work needed to be done over the summer, when the grant to SWCE arrives this will be returned into the non-staff costs budget. Covid and staggered start and end times means there has been increased staff costs for LOs (lunchtime organisers) and after-school staff and there have been additional cleaning costs.

Q: Are you receiving additional funding from the govt for COVID?

In the last academic year academies were only eligible for additional funds for Covid expenditure only if they had a deficit budget and WDCE was not in deficit. The prudent budgeting might mean the school cannot be refunded for additional costs arising from Covid.

Governors were informed the DfE have made a significant bid to the treasury for additional funding for schools but this is not hopeful. The DfE are aware of the concerns.

The school has received catch-up funding of £80 per child and Governors have already agreed the school would employ a TA (teaching assistant). The key groups needing catch up are Yr1 and Yr5. A qualified teacher has applied for the post and she started today. She has started with Yr3 and the existing teachers will provide quality teaching.

Q: Is this catch-up grant paid in three parts?

Yes. And the Executive Headteacher will check this is based on current numbers of children and not previous census data.

The Executive Headteacher gave formal thanks to all staff for their professionalism and for their dedication to the education of the children of the school. The staff have remained positive throughout the pandemic.

Governors were keen to acknowledge their gratitude to the staff and suggested a gift as a gesture. There was money put aside for a social event and this was used for a staff buffet at the start of this year. Messages from parents and Governors are always gratefully received by staff.

Action: HL and MW to discuss appropriate gestures to show appreciation to staff.

8. Governing Body Matters including:

Governor training undertaken

Felicity Bradley has attended virtual training on governance and she could report that there were no issues from this school. Submitting questions in advance were suggested as good practice. In sharing information with other Governors, Felicity reported this school can be praised for its priority on mental health and well-being.

Tom Studman has attended mental health and well-being training with the Diocese. Carole Shaw has undertaken Governor Induction training. There were two sessions (run by One Education). Carole has also attended training for Governors new to Church schools (run by the Manchester Diocese)

9. Governors agree the following Link Governor roles for 2020/21

Q: What is meant by the balanced curriculum?

This was explained as those subjects other than the core subjects of Maths English and Science. These are often referred to as foundation subjects and include learning in areas such as music, art, and languages.

Link Governor role	Link Governor	Staff to liaise with
Safeguarding, Vision & Ethos	Tom Studman	Hannah Large
SEND	Felicity Bradley	Emilie Smith
Pupil Premium & Catch-up funding	Paul Blackburn	Hannah Large
Sports and PE Premium Forest schools	Anne Marie Sarantis	Chris Briggs
English	Lucy Noden	Jane Dunn
Balanced Curriculum (SRE)	Zaheer Saleem & Carole Shaw	Hannah Large/Jane Dunn
Health & Safety	Julia Heatley	Hannah Large
Maths and Science	Karen Michael	Laura Pennington/Lisa Taylor/Kate Chapman

10. Term dates for 2021/22 for approval

The proposed term dates are slightly different to MCC (Manchester City Council) dates as their dates have a five-week and a seven-week half term in the spring term. WDCE (and DCE) term dates propose two six-week half terms in spring term. The other change is the start of the autumn term. WDCE will start on the 1st September which is a Wednesday. (MCC starts the 5th September the following Monday as short weeks usually lead to poor attendance).

The spring term start date 4th January 2021 is the same as MCC. WDCE finishes on Friday 22nd July (MCC will finish three school days later).

Governors formally approved the proposed term dates for 2021/22

11. Policy review & approval

Policy Review Cycle

The cycle of review was explained, some statutory policies need annual review but most can be reviewed every three to five years subject to changes that might be needed.

Safeguarding Policy

This policy has a Covid addendum.

Governors formally approved the Safeguarding Policy

Teaching Statement

Governors formally approved the Teaching Statement

Behaviour Policy

This policy has been amended to include a Covid appendix. The traffic light system has been removed and this now links to other policies.

Governors formally approved the Behaviour Policy

Admissions – proposed criteria for 2022-23 intake

Governors were informed this policy requires annual review. The admissions committee have met to check the oversubscription criteria to ensure clarity and consistency between WDCE and DCE.

The September intake for 2020 has a special addendum approved by the Diocese and LA, relating to worship when churches are open.

Tom Studman reported all clergy have received information from the Diocese to ask clergy to be realistic in this process.

Governors formally approved the Admissions criteria for 2022-23.

12. Date & Times of future meeting

Tuesday 9th February 2021 - 7.30 - remote

Tuesday 23rd March 2021 - 4pm

Tuesday 11th May 2021 - 7.30pm

Tuesday 6th July 2021 - 4pm (meet the children)

13. Closing Prayer

Tom Studman led the closing prayer.

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

Mr Paul Blackburn (Chair)

Meeting closed at 18:00

Summary of actions

- Action: All Governors to read the SIP and SEF and submit questions to the clerk before the next meeting.
- Action: HL to provide actual attendance data alongside DfE required attendance data.
- Action: HL and MW to discuss appropriate gestures to show appreciation to staff.