



CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Full Governing Body

Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 6.00pm

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the meeting was held virtually using Zoom.

Present: Pippa Smith (Co-Chair)
Kate Duncombe (Co-Chair)
Karen Stanton (Co-Headteacher)
Rebecca Snelling (Co-Headteacher)
Natalie Martin
Cristina Turner
Suzy Reed
Shweta Tripathi
Mary-Ann Claridge
Jay Surti
Joanna Skiba-Szymanska

Clerk: Vicky Miles

Apologies: Nil

Reference

Action

1. Welcome to all and apologies for absence

PS formally opened the meeting, extending a welcome to all present and discussed confidentiality ensuring all in agreement.

2. Declaration of interests relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Governing Body held on the 1st July 2021.

The minutes were approved by Governors as a true and accurate record of the meeting, the Chair will sign and handover at the next available point.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Governing Body held on the 1st July 2021

Page 3 - Item 5: KS explained that teacher assessment has been circulated as normal.

Page 4 - Item 7: All governors have now completed the safeguarding training, the Safeguarding policy is up to date, ratified and on the website.

Page 5 – Item 8: Minutes from both committee to be circulated to all governors – actioned by VM.

Page 6 – Item 12: PS thanked those governors that had completed, will chase others. Highlighted that there is a fairly broad range of skills, a gap mostly to do with buildings. PS to resend and chase.

PS

Page 9 – Item 16: RS circulated the Self Evaluation Form and feedback received. Currently in the process of reviewing with SLT, it will be reformatted but not high priority at present.

5. Questions arising from Headteacher's Report

KS circulated the Headteacher's report ahead of the meeting; both KS and RS updated members and answered questions accordingly.

- Interviews for teaching posts have taken place, two conditional offers made for one full time teacher and one part time teacher, start dates under negotiation. Interviews tomorrow for the teaching assistant post.
- Covid update: 24 children have had Covid, 5 are currently isolating 3 of which are siblings.

Question: Diversity is in the RAP does the school receive additional support for EAL students?

RS replied no, the school does not receive any additional financial support. However, NM has found some resources and is seeking external support for EAL children. Children have settled in really well.

Question: As a parent, can you clarify the guidance on if there is a Covid case in the family?

RS replied the only reason a child should not be in school is if they themselves have Covid or are displaying any Covid symptoms and are waiting for a PCR test result. National guidance is children need to be at school as much as possible. The attendance laws at present say that siblings can attend and children should attend if parents have Covid. I hope that as a school we have made the expectations clear and that sending your child to school is the right thing to do.

Question: What is the advice on siblings staying at home, particularly if parents are too ill to bring to school?

RS replied that the Local Authority guidance is that school attendance is classed as an 'exceptional circumstance' so parents who are isolating are permitted to bring their child to school in the car. We arrange this, ensuring their start and finish times are staggered and the children come in through the main entrance avoiding any contact with others. KS added that RS has

arranged for parents with Covid to drop off at different times, this is the guidance at present. It does feel uncomfortable, but any absence is recorded as unauthorised and it is important that pupils attend school.

Question: There are quite a few children off with Covid, have you noticed any signs of Long Covid?

RS replied that some children have not had any symptoms and are completing Remote Learning whereas others have some mild cold symptoms. All recovering well.

Question: How is engagement with parents going and are there any problems?

RS replied that parent consultations went ahead as normal as possible; parents were asked to do an LFD test beforehand and requested only one parent to attend. We managed to go ahead; we would not be able to do them now. It was lovely for parents to see children's books and to be face to face with their teacher. Everything is continuing to be as near to normal as possible, still making SEND phone calls and many phone calls to parents when needed.

Question: Are parents still supportive?

RS replied yes and KS added that parents have volunteered to help on trips, which we felt was positive. The Nativity cannot be performed to parents so will be virtual again this year.

KD added that this term feels a lot more connected than last half term. The Christmas Fair still going ahead outside. RS added that in a couple of weeks a parent forum would take place.

Question: Are there any major systematic problems with the implementation of the curriculum?

RS replied that Subject Leaders were being given time to look at the curriculum delivery and it is being monitored very closely.

Question: With regard to Co-Headship, is there anything we need to be aware of?

RS replied that some staff have commented on communication. When we checked we found notes or emails were available but a few staff had not read them. All meetings: SLT, staff, TA meetings were taking place and weekly whole staff briefings; this ensures whole school is involved, expectations are shared, it is about making sure staff know where to look and for them to take responsibility to check emails etc.

Question: How is the school doing compared to other schools?

RS replied that in comparison with many our Covid numbers are still low; one to one calls with the Local Authority have taken place; they have said that as we only have a few cases there is no need to worry. We are pretty sure it is not being transmitted within school; it seems to be from Secondary schools or community transmission.

Question: How are teachers coping with not having children in?

RS replied that staff are feeling very wobbly, there are lots doing daily LFDs and PCRs. They are planning and teaching for in school as well as planning and setting Remote Learning too. Everyone is doing their very best, a great team.

Question: Do any of the newly appointed speak Spanish? Currently no Spanish speaking teacher in school.

KS replied no, it is an absolute rarity to get a Spanish-speaking teacher in primary schools, at primary level you rarely get a fluent Spanish-speaking teacher. The NC objectives for primary languages is to get children motivated to learn a language, to learn some basics, to learn about a different culture and to prepare them for more focused language learning in secondary school. We hear Spanish being taught fluently online; our aim is to get children to be keen to learning a language. It is not the specific language (Spanish) but around the wider understanding of the language and their culture.

Question: They are expected to meet a level by the time they get to secondary school. How can you do this without a fluent speaker?

KS replied that we meet the requirements of the NC. Peter Law, Head of CVC, has assured us that our children are no better or worse than any others when they arrive in Y7. They learn about the appreciation of the language and the cultures. Many pupils from other schools do not learn Spanish in primary school.

At this point the Chair asked the Governor to follow up this line of enquiry with the school in the role of a parent as this was an operational enquiry and not strategic.

6. Clarification of any points in PPF Minutes

Minutes circulated ahead of meeting, all governors had the opportunity to read. No questions.

7. Clarification of any points in PCS minutes

Minutes circulated ahead of meeting, all governors had the opportunity to read. No questions.

8. RAP and Recovery Plan

KS reported that SLT had looked through it today, key points:

- Recovery section removed as back within normal operational phase.
- Leaders of all subjects have drawn up an action plan, which feeds, into the RAP.
- Reading: have purchased Little Wandle a systematic synthetic phonics programme. One member of staff is overseeing training and resources are being prepared. The plan is to share this with parents at the end of this term ready for a launch in January.
- Writing: a little less concrete, looking at pre pandemic levels – nationally issues with writing gaps continue to emerge. A writing group has been formed; they are researching a consistent whole-school approach. There is a two-week period on place to research, then meet

to discuss findings, there are many different approaches so will try to narrow it down.

- Times Tables being monitored
- Reviewing curriculum, particularly looking at sequencing, this is a much bigger job and all Subject Leaders are on board with it as it is an appraisal target for all.

NM reported that:

- The 11 by 11-character education (what each child will experience) has been added to the topic web on the website.
- NM is attending a course on Diversity particularly as to support our rising numbers of EAL. We are hoping to increase the profile to ensure is a welcoming place for all groups of pupils. KS added that CREDS used to support with interpreting but this has since been disbanded. The hope is that NM will be able to cascade her learning about diversity to all staff.

KS added that we have some Subject Leaders that are very strong and some that are developing; we are trying to source some external training.

KS to circulate the updated RAP.

KS

CT added that Subject Leaders taking the thoughts about different subjects with groups of children is really impressive.

KD added that as parents we do see some of the actions. There is a huge amount of work for reading and writing on the RAP.

PS reported that meetings took place with NM and Francesca Woods, both very positive about the support from SLT and about pupils experience of it. Positive meetings.

CT and ST meeting with NM next week.

MAC has meeting scheduled with RS.

ST reported that a very positive science meeting took place with Denver Gladwell and Denver is doing a brilliant job.

JS not yet planned meeting asked if there was a deadline, PS explained that curriculum monitoring takes place once a term, the expectation is that a phone call or Zoom meeting takes place ½ hour maximum, JS, PS, KD to stay after tonight's meeting for a brief chat.

JS-S met with Megan Turner.

SR no planned meeting as stepping down as governor.

Question: Where do we put forms following a meeting?

KS replied that it would be a good idea to put on the governor area of the website. Governor should write up, share with teacher who will agree it is an accurate report, then school will have a copy and governor can upload. All governors to log on to the governors only section of the website over the next week. Any problems email PS for support.

All governors

9. Feedback from Training Attended

KD and PS attended training. All governors to sign up to new governor induction training.

MAC and JS-S to meet via Zoom to complete training together.

JS booked on to complete four courses.

MAC, JS-S
ST

ST to book.

ELeaning course regarding governor's roles and responsibilities, all governors to complete. KS to circulate link.

All governors, KS

PS has drafted a training log, all governors to email PS when booked on a course.

Question: If we read or research something, would it help to share feedback and if so where?

PS replied that feedback can be given at meetings or a short piece can be written and placed on the website. You could also flag up any useful reading.

KS added that pre meeting reading could be added, PS and KD to look at a proforma to capture the main points from training.

PS, KD

PS added that a link for new governor induction training circulated today.

10. Governor Recruitment

Kevin Vanterpool is formally no longer a governor.

KS explained that following an advert placed for parent governor one nomination received, this closes tomorrow so she will be elected; she is a parent in Red Class, and this will be confirmed tomorrow.

PS added that a co-opted governor has been recruited, she has worked in special educational needs for years.

We still have a vacancy for clerk.

KD added that unfortunately local resident she approached declined the post.

KS added that David Newton (Reverend) was approached but sadly, he does not have the capacity.

11. Health & Safety

RS reported that the pavement issue outside the school gates has not yet been resolved. Still trying to work out whose responsibility it is.

12. Safeguarding

The three Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) monitor My Concern very closely, very vigilant. Any children that are 'on watch' are closely watched. Constantly checking in with teachers and parents.

PS reported that a meeting took place with Lesley Whitehead who explained how the Single Central Register works. Making sure all people who work with children are suitable; there are a whole range of different procedures and checks. There are very clear flow charts displayed, it is clear that anyone who presents without the correct identification and authority will not be allowed to enter the school. PS added the section on Prevent training is very useful.

13. Covid Impact

KS reported that we are in an Enhanced Response Area (ERA) and although we have had a support call with LA, numbers remain low. KS explained that neither of them (RS and KS) would have gotten through this time without the support of each other. The pressure on staff and pupil absence is taking its

toll, everyone is exhausted. We have a supportive team and there is a lot of anxiety around exhausted staff. There are huge external pressures, many things that need to be completed: GDPR audit, Asset Register, Co2 Monitors and lots more. When contacting school, please be mindful of office staff. Lesley has a huge task with payments and pensions at present.

KS added that there was a Heads meet today based around teacher well-being. Trying to shift to a positive bias, keeping children at centre so we know the curriculum, teaching and learning is good. Something about our school has attracted two fantastic new teachers so we must focus on what we are doing well, not on everything else that we need to do.

Question: What can we do to recognise and support the staff?

KS replied we are just going to try to keep the staff feeling valued. RS added that we are not the only school; it is the same everywhere.

PS added that the governors are aware of the amazing job your staff are doing. Is it possible for us to come into school when the children are not there to help with some jobs like the Asset Register? KS replied that it will get it done; we just need to make the time to do it. However, if we can call on you to come in and support with it that would be great. We will let the staff know that the governors really appreciate everything that they are doing.

All agreed that PS would briefly join the staff Zoom meeting in the morning to say thank you. RS to send Zoom link.

RS

Question: Is there any capacity for staff to book their jobs during the school day?

KS replied yes, we allow all staff to go for their flu or Covid jabs during school time.

14. SEND/PP Report

NM reported that this term

- SEND support phone calls to touch base with parents went ahead.
- Support Plans shared at parent's consultations highlighting the actions and targets.
- Some support taking place in person.
- External support agencies coming into school now.
- Pupil Premium is at its highest with 23 children
- Together with KS, we are writing strategy documents (our plan and how we are supporting children) this is very nearly complete and will be on the website shortly.

KS added that David Newton (Reverend) has offered money from the Sitwell Trust. We have suggested they give some money towards the cost of trips, this would mean we are able to offer disadvantaged children a free (or very low cost) place.

NM added that we have remained in touch with Pupil Premium families; phone calls that were carried out throughout Lockdown and is continuing, as keeping the links going as supporting them is important.

15. Other Matters Appropriate to the School and Governing Body

A massive thank you and goodbye to SR, VM and RM.

PS and KD thanked all in attendance.

There being no further business the meeting was formally closed at 19.34pm

Signed as a true record..... Date.....
Co-Chair