



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF MANOR PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY HELD VIRTUALLY ON 23RD APRIL 2020**

Governors Present:	Mr G. Mason	GM	Chair Headteacher	
	Mr. S. Cotterill	SC		
	Cllr.S. Gardiner	SG		
	Mrs. L. Dalzell	LD		
	Miss E. Holden	EH		
	Mr P. Jones	PJ		
	Mrs C. Walley	CW		
	Mr. L. Williams	CLW		
	Mrs J. Hopkinson	JH		left at 6:25 pm
	Mr R. Woollam	RW		

Also in attendance:	Mrs. S. Pomeroy	Clerk to Governors School Business Manager Deputy Headteacher, Associate member
	Mrs K. Crosland	
	Mrs S. Jeffery	

This meeting was held via an online platform due to the national closure of schools and the government restrictions on face to face meetings.

PART ONE - NON- CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES AND AOB ITEMS

Governors **agreed** that the apologies received from Paul Deakin and Julie Nichols be accepted.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Stewart Gardiner is a member of Cheshire East Council.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Geoff Mason was nominated at the previous meeting for the position of Chair of Governors. He accepted the nomination and, following a vote, was duly elected as Chair of Governors for a period of one year or until the summer term meeting 2021 of the full board of governors.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- a) It was confirmed that Cathryn Walley and Lee Williams were elected unopposed as parent governors for a period of four years with effect from 01.04.20.
- b) There are currently no vacancies on the governing board.
- c) It was noted that Paul Deakin's term of office expires on 19.06.20. He informed the Chair that he is willing to stand for another term of office.

5. PART ONE MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The part one minutes of the governing board meeting held on 4th December 2019 were confirmed as a correct record. GM will sign a copy of the minutes and provide to the school for retention. **ACTION**

The Action Log was reviewed, and it was confirmed that all actions have been met and closed as appropriate.

6. CHAIR'S ACTION

The Chair reported that no action has been taken on behalf of the governing board since the last meeting.

7. PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors received the minutes from the following committees which were circulated prior to the meeting:

Pastoral Committee	30.01.2020
Resources Committee	13.02.2020

Governors noted the minutes.

The Learning and Teaching Committee meeting scheduled for 19.03.20 was cancelled due to Covid-19 and the restrictions on face to face meetings.

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS

The School Business Manager's (SBM) Report was circulated prior to the meeting on Governor Hub.

- a) A budget meeting was held with the school's budget officer on 03.02.20 and the 3-year plan formed part of the SBM's report. The school is predicting a carry forward of £146,379 at the end of 2019-20 and a carry forward of £153,075 at the end of 2020-21 and £89,887 at the end of 2021-22. KC informed governors that it is not possible to approve a draft budget currently as a further meeting is required with the school's budget officer. The school is hoping to arrange a virtual meeting with the FMSO shortly. The budget will be submitted by 30.06.20.
- b) Governors **approved** the SFVS via Governor Hub. KC confirmed that the SFVS was submitted to Cheshire East by 3^{1st} March 2020. The school will receive feedback on the submission by the end of the school year 2020.
- c) Governors **approved** the Manual of Internal Financial Procedures (MOIFP) and KC confirmed that it was submitted to Cheshire East.

KC highlighted the following items to governors from her report:

Sports Grant

Around £19,000 will remain of the Sports Grant allocation at the end of August 2020 as this money was allocated to sports week in June 2020 and the event has been cancelled due to Covid-19. The school has consulted Cheshire East Finance department to ascertain whether this money will be clawed back by the DfE as it should be spent by 31.08.20. The Finance team believe it is unlikely that the DfE will clawback the money under the current exceptional circumstances and will confirm with the school. SC pointed out that the money would have been spent if the children were attending school as normal.

Q. If the school has allocated this money, can a purchase order be raised now?

R. This is not possible as a delivery date is required on the purchase order and the school has no confirmation from the government of when schools will re-open.

Q. Are there restrictions on what the Sports Grant can be spent on?

R. Yes, it cannot be used for capital projects.

Cashless system

The cashless system is working well in school. The school has refunded money to parents for some visits which were cancelled due to Covid-19. The Year 6 visit is currently still planned to go ahead, and a final decision will be made after 07.05.20.

GM **thanked** the staff for managing the smooth introduction of the cashless system.

Wrap Around Care (WAC)

The school went out to tender for the WAC provision. One bid was received and another is due at the beginning of May 2020. St Vincent's was consulted and invited to tender but declined to do so. The project has now been postponed until September 2020 due to the Covid-19 situation and the children will continue to attend the after-school provision at St Vincent's Primary School at the beginning of the academic year 2020-21.

Q. Has the WAC proposal been discussed with Cheshire Academies Trust (CAT)?

R. No, this is a school specific issue. The original intention was that it would be established before the school converts to academy status. Some of the other schools in CAT operate WAC provision.

Q. Are St Vincent's aware that the proposal to establish WAC provision has been delayed?

R. No. KC will contact St Vincent's to inform them of the delay. **ACTION**

Premises

The 5-year electrical testing was completed during February 2020 half term and Cheshire East informed of the action. The school is following the directive from the Local Authority to maintain fire drills, gas tests etc during this period of national school closures.

Q. Is the school now compliant?

R. Yes. The school is awaiting the certificate from the contractor which will then be submitted to Cheshire East.

CCTV

The cost of repairing the old system was found to be greater than that of a new replacement system. An order was placed for a new system, but this is on hold due to the Covid-19 situation.

Q. What is the cost of the new system?

R. An order was placed with Tudor Security at a cost of £3,350.

Kitchen refurbishment

The school is awaiting confirmation of when the planned refurbishment will commence.

GDPR

109 suppliers have provided statements on how they use the school's data and a further three more are pending. KC met with the School Business Manager from one of the other schools in CAT to discuss GDPR and informed governors that the school will be required to make some changes upon conversion to comply with CAT's GDPR procedures.

Q. Does KC have the capacity now to investigate the changes to GDPR procedures required by CAT?

R. Currently there is limited capacity for KC to do this and limited capacity within CAT. Staff are working remotely which presents challenges and the workload of the SBM has increased.

Q. Is further work being carried out to update the ICT suite?

R. The current phase of the work is to update software; a new system has been installed to improve safeguarding.

Site works

The planned decoration of the school hall is currently on hold. The site manager is working in school on other decorating projects and is also completing online training modules.

Q. Why has the decoration of the school hall been postponed?

R. The hall is in use to accommodate the children who are currently attending school.

Q. Is any work being carried out on the spinney and woodland projects?

R. Some work has been undertaken on levelling the ground and the school was about to place an order for fencing immediately prior to the government announcement on the closure of schools. KC enquired about ordering wood chippings, but the company is experiencing difficulties in sourcing them.

Q. Does the school have a schedule for the renewal of contracts?

R. The SBM is in the process of updating the schedule and obtaining copies of all contracts. Most contracts are on a rolling programme, except for the staff illness insurance, 3-year photocopier contract and the annual cyclical maintenance contract.

9. PART ONE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING

The Headteacher's report was circulated prior to the meeting and contained the following items:

- Introduction
- School Closure
- Safeguarding
- Pupils
- Staffing
- Achievement and Standards
- Parents and Community
- Premises and Equipment
- Academy

SC explained that this report differs from the usual headteacher's report due to the circumstances around the current national closure of schools and highlighted the following matters to governors:

School Closure

The school received short notice regarding the national closure of schools and consequently it was difficult to prepare for this unprecedented situation. The school took the decision to close on Thursday 19th March 2020 to carry out a deep clean and was instructed by the Local Authority to re-open the next day. Home learning packs were prepared for the children as the school then closed until further notice at the end of the day on Friday 20th March 2020.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding of pupils is a major priority at the moment and the school is in constant contact with the SCiES team. Staff are working in school on a rota basis and a member of the SLT is always present to take responsibility for safeguarding. Vulnerable children were identified, and the school has been in contact with their families on a weekly basis. Social Care are contacted if there is no response from a family.

Q. Is the CPOMS system still being used to record safeguarding concerns?

R. Yes. Measures have been put into place to ensure that staff are not working alone with children. No safeguarding concerns have been recorded from within the school setting, but family situations are being monitored. The school is heavily reliant on other professionals such as police officers and social workers. There was an occasion where the police did not inform the school of a domestic abuse incident.

Q. Can the school pass on the concerns regarding Operation Encompass procedures not being followed?

R. The school has contacted the SCiES team previously over this matter and will do so again. **ACTION**

The school followed government advice to remain open only for the children of key workers and vulnerable children and to maintain the numbers of children in school at a minimum. Initially there was daily contact from Cheshire East; this has now reduced. The school has also received support from CAT. GM commented that there has been so much information from Cheshire East that it was difficult at times to extract the key

points. However, governors acknowledged that the current situation is unprecedented, constantly changing and extremely difficult to manage.

Pupils

There has been little advice on how to assess the children under the current circumstances. The school was expecting good SAT's results for this Year 6 cohort and the children are disappointed not to be taking the tests. The school will assess the children at the point when school re-opens and is expecting that revision will be necessary.

Q. What arrangements are in place for children transferring to high school in September 2020?

R. The school is hopeful that it will be able to re-open in June 2020 and transition will be addressed then. The school will provide teacher assessment information to the high school.

Q. Will formal assessments be carried out if the children return in June 2020 and is the school expecting a decline in standards?

R. All statutory tests have been cancelled for 2020. Teachers will consider the internal assessment data from March 2020 and the predicted grade for the pupils when carrying out teacher assessment.

Q. What expectations has the school set around learning whilst the children are at home?

R. The school has provided guidance to support parents with the home learning programme. The children are asked to complete 30 minutes per day of Reading, Maths, TT Rockstars and Phonics. Links have been provided to online resources and guidance given on how to structure the day. Each child's family circumstances are different and there is a wide variance in how much work pupils can complete at home and how much support they receive.

Q. What will the school do to address the widening gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers?

R. The school sent a letter to parents to encourage and challenge them to complete the tasks set by the school with their children. A minority of parents were unhappy with the tone of the letter, but the school also received many messages of support. Once school re-opens it will work closely with the community. Children will be assessed when the school re-opens and appropriate interventions put into place.

Governors commented that it is difficult for the school to intervene in a home situation and insist on children completing school work. There is no expectation from the DfE that the school provide home learning. It also must be recognised that some families do not have the appropriate space or resources for children to learn at home.

Q. Are lessons being provided for those children who are attending school?

R. During the first two weeks of the school closure, the children brought their learning packs in to school to complete. Now they are doing the activities which have been recommended for all the pupils. The children attending school cover a wide range of age groups and learning in the usual way is not possible.

Q. Would the school consider loaning equipment to children?

R. The school is not sending equipment home as it is a resource for all the pupils. It is understood that most children have access to a computer. Paper based learning has been provided only for those who request it. It is recognised that not all children would complete paper-based learning activities if they were provided. Class teachers are in the process of ringing every child in their class this week and they have received positive feedback from parents on the school's approach and no parents have requested paper-based activities.

Q. Would the school consider teaching lessons via an online platform?

R. The school has been advised not to do this.

Q. Have pupils in Year 6 been contacted by their class teacher?

R. This is planned for tomorrow.

Q. How many applications has the school received for Reception places in September 2020?

R. The school received 24 first choice applications and has had 2 late entries. The budget forecast was based on 25 children and the school is expecting to admit 26.

Q. How does the number of applications compare to previous years?

R. The school has received more first choice applications this year.

Staffing

SC informed governors that the staff have responded extremely well to the situation. They have been directed to work at home and have been pro-active in completing tasks and updating their class web pages.

The staff are healthy and would like to be in school more as they miss the contact with their colleagues and with the children. A "what's app" group has been established to aid communication. EH reported that when staff are on the rota to be in school, they are enjoying spending quality time with the children and with staff from different sectors of the school.

Q. Is it appropriate for governors to send a letter to the staff in recognition of their hard work at this difficult time?

R. Yes, the staff were very appreciative when they received a letter from GM at the early stages of the school closure. CW will share a document from her work place which could be adapted. **ACTION**

Q. How is the mental well-being of the staff? Are any coping with the lockdown alone?

R. The SLT is in regular contact with all the staff and is not aware that any are experiencing great difficulties.

LD informed governors that Knutsford Town Council has set up a support group and offered their services to staff. SC commented that staff well-being is important at this time; it is a highly unusual and stressful situation and it is difficult to relax.

JH left the meeting at 6:25 pm.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It was confirmed that relevant items from the Director's spring term 2020 report were discussed at committee meetings and that the summer term 2020 report will be available shortly.

11. SCHOOL POLICIES

SC explained that the school is required to consult parents over the RSE Policy. Governors **agreed** that in this time of national school closures it is inappropriate to carry out this consultation and agreed to adopt the policy in draft form and for the school to carry out parental consultation when it re-opens.

PJ raised a query on page 3 of the policy and will follow this up via email with SC.
ACTION

12. MEETINGS

Governors **agreed** to cancel the committee meetings planned for the summer term 2020 and instead to hold shorter full governing board meetings as below:

Thursday 21st May 2020 at 5:00 pm

Thursday 18th June 2020 at 5:00 pm

These meetings will be held via an online platform.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. IMPACT STATEMENT

How has the Board of Governors helped move the school forward in this meeting?

- **Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;**
Governors organised virtual meetings to ensure that monitoring of the school can continue under the current circumstances.
Governors ensured that the school is meeting its obligations to vulnerable children and to those of key workers.
Governors ensured that the well-being of staff is addressed.
Governors approved the draft RSE Policy.
- **Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school;**
Governors ensured that home learning is provided for the children.
Governors questioned how the school will address the needs of children when they return to school.
- **Oversee the financial performance of the school, ensuring value for money;**
Governors approved the MOIFP and the SFVS.
Governors received budget information.

The meeting moved to the Part Two agenda.

Chair: Almaz

Dated: 23/5/20

