



Dr South's CE Primary School

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Nurture, Educate, Inspire

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Minutes of the Local Governing Body (LGB) meeting held on Thursday 4th February 2021 at 7pm using Zoom

<u>Present:</u>	Calum Miller (CM), Chair [Foundation] Kathryn Campbell (KC) [Foundation] Jon Conibear (JC) [Foundation] Rob Dallison (RD) [Foundation] Liz Halsey (LH) [Staff] Steve Hayes (SH) [Foundation] Huw Morgan (HM) [Headteacher] Jonathan Nicholl (JN) [Foundation] Matthew Nicholson (MN) [Foundation] Mandy O'Sullivan (MOS), Vice-Chair [Parent] Hannah Penwarden (HP) [Parent] Ruth Sibly (RS) [Foundation] Helen Watson (HW) [Co-opted]
<u>In attendance:</u>	Bryony Thomas (BT), Clerk
<u>Apologies:</u>	All members were present
Confirmation of Quorum - Quorum was met	

No.	ITEM	ACTION
1	Welcome and opening prayer CM welcomed everyone and SH opened the meeting with a prayer.	
2	Receipt of apologies for absence All members were present.	
3	Declaration of any new interests including related party transactions (RPTs) There were no new declarations of interest. No RPTs were declared.	
4	Review of the RPT register There were no RPTs to review.	
5	Notification of any urgent business None was raised.	
6	Approval of the minutes from the previous LGB meeting held on 3rd December 2020* These were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. CM to leave a signed copy at school.	CM
7	Discussion of matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere:	

Certified true copy of minutes.....

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7.1	Enabling home internet access via mobile hotspots Remote learning is discussed in detail in item 8.	
7.2	ODST tendering on behalf of schools MN had contacted Mike Bingham at ODST but had not heard back. JC and MN will remain in contact with ODST over this matter.	JC/MN
7.3	Strategic planning and curriculum review There has been no further progress on this item, because of the move to remote learning provision and the work that this entails. It may be possible to report progress at the next meeting.	
8	Update on school closure/provision of online education and care for children of critical care workers On the Sunday before the start of term, the prime minister had announced that all schools would open. The Monday was an inset day at Dr South's, where staff prepared for the term ahead, but that evening there was an announcement that all schools would close from the following day. HM had anticipated closure, though later in the week, and had already informed parents that the school would be shut for the Tuesday and Wednesday to all but vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. The Emergency Advisory committee had approved this closure. Because of the lack of warning, the remote provision took a little time to run smoothly but this was achieved by the third week. School was to be open for pupils of critical workers, who are defined as those workers critical to the Covid-19 and Brexit responses. This has meant a much greater number of pupils are eligible to attend school than in the March closure. Alongside the greater numbers is the pressure from the Health and Safety Executive to ensure social distancing and tight bubbles are maintained. On any one day, approximately one-third of all pupils are in school, with approximately one-half attending at some point in the week. This is the highest proportion of pupils attending across all ODST schools. Pupils on-site access the remote learning in exactly the same way as pupils at home. At the start of the day, there is a live session with the class teacher. There is also a recorded video lesson available to access at any point in the day, generally on maths or English. For the afternoon, links are provided for activities from the broader curriculum. The school is following the Ofsted guidance on remote provision, published on 11th January. Feedback from parents has indicated a sense of unfairness that so many pupils are in school for face to face teaching. In fact, the only difference for these pupils is the social time at playtime. Work is submitted for marking via Teams or photos. At the lower end of the school there are more live interactions with teachers. Live lessons are staggered across the school, to make it easier for parents with several children. SIM cards have been offered if needed, but there has been no take up to date. One to one support has been offered to parents in setting up the technology to access provision. Where pupils have failed to engage with the work, teaching assistants (TAs) now work 1:1 with these pupils, talking them through the work set and then following up later in the day. Engagement has improved markedly. For the younger children, in addition to the class sessions there are weekly 1:1 slots with staff, often for phonics, and progress is recorded using Tapestry. All pupils are encouraged	

to have an active lifestyle, and there are timetabled PE sessions. Where pupils attend Forest school, their classmates at home are set the same tasks. The student teachers are running social sessions at lunchtime, and some children identified for additional support by the school are receiving ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support) sessions online.

Q: When will the school reopen?

A: Staff see only the same news bulletins, but it looks like it may be 8th March. If closure continues beyond this date, HM hopes to extend provision for those offsite, such as sessions at Forest school. This is not allowed at present.

Q: Is Nursery open?

A: Yes, but there are very few pupils attending Nursery at present.

Q: Are there any pupils attending who don't fit into the categories given?

A: No.

Governors congratulated staff on the achievement of providing 1:1 sessions, and wondered if staff had a sense of how much of the curriculum will be covered during this period of offsite learning. Staff do not – Ofsted emphasises in their guidance not to rush teaching within the remote provision. Governors also wondered what the comparative success might be between pupils learning remotely at home and at school. This is difficult to assess, as it is not clear how much support pupils are getting at home with any submitted work. This week, Key Stage 2 pupils will be completing small maths assessments.

Q: Are there any mandatory exams?

A: No, all primary assessments have been cancelled for the year, though the school may choose to use them.

Governors expressed concern over the complicated and comprehensive provision and questioned whether it is sustainable in the long-term if lockdown is extended. It is not, and would need to be amended. Governors also questioned whether the school has clarified what is expected of parents in the way of support for their children. It was emphasised that staff are very aware of the problems facing parents, and are doing their best to support them. Governors recognised that mass communication will not address this issue. Some parents will have more capacity for support than others, and staff have always highlighted that pupil wellbeing and mental health are the most important things to focus on. If well and resilient, pupils should be capable of rapid learning on their return to the classroom, and this was seen in the autumn where the high levels of interventions were very successful in enabling pupils to catch up.

Governors highlighted that parents are using various social media groups to ask questions about the school's current arrangements, and wondered whether there would be a place for a formal discussion with staff. It was agreed that parents should be encouraged to bring any issues to school via the office email. Parent governors could also highlight the fact that pupils in school are having the same remote learning as those at home. Staff are under enormous pressure at the moment; governors emphasised their concern for staff wellbeing.

The discussion was concluded with enormous thanks being expressed to the staff for all

	their work, for the speed in implementing the remote provision, the care and attention given to each child and the continuous adaptations being made.	
9	Discussion of headteacher's report, including staff and pupil wellbeing* The report is for the autumn term, which seems disconnected from the present situation. Governors questioned the section on budget monitoring, which stated that the school is due to be financially on track to the end of December. It was agreed that the wording should be amended to reflect the changes that have occurred to the financial position of the school. The section should read: "the school is due to be financially on track, allowing for the changes that have taken place, to the end of December". <i>Q: What is the procedure when cause for concern forms are completed?</i> <i>A: The concern is investigated, and advice may be sought from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if needed.</i> The information on number of cause for concern forms completed in the term is included in the report at the request of governors at a previous meeting, to allow governors to monitor levels of concern. <i>Q: The number of Nursery pupils is low. Will this impact on the number of pupils coming into Reception in September?</i> <i>A: This is not yet known. Historically, pupils from outside catchment who have attended nursery have not tended to go on from Nursery to Reception, so it is hoped there will not be an impact on Reception intake.</i> <i>Q: What is happening with catch up funding?</i> <i>A: The school is to receive three lots of funding, pre-announced for the year. The funding was used to employ additional staff from the start of the autumn term so has been fully allocated. We don't know anything yet about the new money announced last week.</i> <i>Q: How will you use it?</i> <i>A: The current additional funding is being used for additional support including 1:1 Teams sessions. How the new money will be used will depend on what happens on the 8th March.</i>	HM
10	Review of the SEF* It was explained that the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) is a visual translation of the head's report using Ofsted criteria. These criteria may change radically once the pandemic is over, but for now the criteria provide a useful framework for the SEF. Curriculum statements are assessed as orange as the curriculum is being developed. The rest of the statements are green or blue, with the exception of "learners receive appropriate relationship and sex education". The current provision is being reviewed, and requires a full parental consultation which keeps being delayed by the pandemic. Governors were asked to confirm whether they agree with the current SEF. <i>Q: Who else has any input?</i> <i>A: Governors, prior to the meeting. The yellow forms, which in normal times are completed during governor monitoring visits, would normally form part of the evidence for statements.</i> Governors were surprised that there was no formal input from staff, but this is not statutory. It is good practice to involve all stakeholders but this is not possible at the moment. The T&L committee also reviews sections of the SEF, and there is teacher input	

	then. Governors questioned how the development of the curriculum was progressing. It is expected to be ready by the summer, though it is possible that the curriculum will undergo big changes post-pandemic so it is unclear how much energy to invest in polishing the curriculum ready for use. Governors suggested that each LGB meeting could reflect on one of the five headings used in the SEF, with a governor taking responsibility for collecting the evidence. It was agreed that this is a good idea, but for more normal times. Governors confirmed that they agreed with the current evaluation.	
11	Review of progress on the school action plan* Two of the priorities are going well. The school focus on mental health (priority 1) has proved very timely, and closing the gaps in learning arising from the March closure (priority 4) was progressing very well before the current lockdown and move to remote provision. Improving progress and attainment in maths for the more able (Priority 3) is proving challenging at the moment, but curriculum development (Priority 2) is on track for completion by the summer. <i>Q: How much of the gap will you be able to close?</i> <i>A: This is the priority, to close the gap by July, but whilst also ensuring good mental health and a broad and balanced curriculum.</i> Governors agreed that priorities 1 and 4 should become the main priorities, and the school will not be held to account for achieving priorities 2 and 3 by the end of the year. HM will look at ways to increase support for pupils on their return. Governors were reassured that Forest school would continue as part of the broad curriculum still to be delivered.	HM
11.1	SEN report* Interventions to enable pupils to catch up had proved extremely successful. Pupils receiving ELSA before lockdown are being offered participation in online social groups, as well as any pupils causing concern now. All teachers are keeping a close eye on all of their pupils and any concerns are immediately reported to LH. The school's definition of vulnerable is very broad, and anyone the school considers to be vulnerable is given the opportunity to attend school. Governors liked the idea of a wellbeing week, and thanked LH for her full and excellent report. Their thanks were reiterated to all teaching staff, under the leadership of LH, for such care of pupil wellbeing.	
12	Review of SIAMS The distinctiveness of Dr South's as a Christian school continues with daily acts of worship, some live, some on paper. There are weekly religious education (RE) lessons for all classes. HP had met with LH before Christmas. Now that RE is taught by teachers rather than LH, there needs to be upskilling in how to do so. There is some ODBE training available, but it is important to establish which teachers need training on what areas. This will be easier once the curriculum has been fully planned. In the short-term, LH is providing training unit by unit. Medium-term plans will depend on the gaps in knowledge established by development of the curriculum. LH/HM to report back at the next meeting. The last SIAMS inspection was in March 2019. Inspections are every 5 years, but the next	LH/HM

	inspection will be delayed by the pandemic extension. A visit from an ODBE SIAMS link advisor is due half way between inspections. Bletchington has done a lot of work towards their next inspection, so HM is now very familiar with the revised framework. Governors agreed that it would be valuable to discuss what they expect of the school as a church school. HM/CM to decide on the timing of this discussion.	HM/CM
13	Receipt and discussion of report from FPP* Minutes of the recent FPP meeting and a report on the finances prepared for that meeting by JC and HM had been circulated. Every year the school is required to produce a balanced budget. Donors fund the broad and balanced curriculum, and this can be seen in the budget monitoring sheets. This year, income is less than budgeted because of the early ending of the joint headship with Bletchington and reduced income from after school clubs. Combined with the increased costs arising from the Covid pandemic, there will need to be a larger withdrawal from the school's trust fund than usual to balance the budget, but it is expected that following the withdrawal, £70,000 will still remain in the fund for future years. The March FPP meeting will discuss the draft budget, where changes will need to be made to avoid a deficit budget. If desired, the LGB could also discuss the draft budget in March before formal approval in May. The benchmarking paper from ODST has provided a useful comparison of the school's expenditure compared with other ODST schools and the areas flagged as high spending will be examined when drafting the budget. The next FPP meeting will also review the results of the staff welfare survey, which is of particular value while staff are under such pressure. Staff wellbeing is of great concern to governors, who have a duty of care. Though most staff are in school, their dedication and the pressure to provide remote learning and critical worker school can mean very long hours. Governors asked if there were any interventions that they could do or fund, such as any staffing needs. Although it is recognised things should get easier, staff governors were asked to consider what could be done, or what the school could invest in, to ensure staff have a complete break over Easter and the summer holidays. It was also suggested that a team building activity would be required when all staff are back to working normally to rebuild the team. Staff have had to work in isolation for a long time now. Governors asked whether the student teachers added to pressure on staff, but they have been a positive addition to the staff, helping at Forest school and running online social sessions.	CM/HM Staff govs
14	Discussion of summary of governor views on ODST LGB effectiveness and skills audit* A summary paper of the one to one discussions held with all governors by the chair had been circulated. CM was very grateful for everyone's time, and had found the conversations fruitful. The paper will be created as a live document so that governors can add to it or amend it, and it will then be fully discussed at the March LGB meeting. Governors suggested that specific details for addressing some of the suggestions are added, and CM will do this before the next meeting.	CM CM
15	Update on Governor training	

	JC, KC and RD had done some training on Target Tracker before tonight's meeting. HW will provide further training if required. RD had attended a Better Governor webinar on School finance – an introduction that had proved useful with some good material that he will circulate. The suggestion of purchasing a school subscription was raised. The Governor Services training programme has also been transformed, and it was agreed that BT and CM would look at possible training programme subscriptions, now that the school no longer subscribes to the Excellence in Governance programme. A list of available courses will be circulated and governors were asked to undertake at least one training course by the May meeting. They were also reminded that there is an allowance so no governors are expected to pay for their courses. Various SmartLog courses had been circulated to governors, which should be completed. Governors were reminded that all training courses completed should be recorded on GovernorHub. Governor training features in the head's report.	BT/CM All govs
16	Policy ratification	
16.1	Final approval of the Admissions policy 2022-23* This is a standard diocese policy, and there has been no material changes. The policy has been posted on the website for at least 6 weeks, and there have been no comments received. Governors queried when the policy is updated to include numbers for September. This is done once there are definite numbers available. Governors also asked if pupils were ever turned down, but this has only happened once since 2011 (the arrival of the current head). The maximum number that can be admitted to Reception each year is 15. The policy was adopted.	
17	Update on safeguarding* RS was thanked for her excellent report and the work that she does as safeguarding governor. She has been very impressed by how well all staff know the pupils, which can help prevent the escalation of issues. With regard to e-safety, the main problem is multiple child families and sharing devices. Safeguarding training has been provided through SmartLog and all governors are expected to complete this. Katie Rayner (KR), previous school business manager, had been a deputy safeguarding lead (DSL). Three DSLs remain in the school (HM, LH, HW). Though only one is required legally, a replacement for KR will be trained. LH and all staff were thanked for their hard work in this area.	All govs
18	Update on health and safety A sampling of risk assessments is being completed and will be approved by MN. The annual audit is due after half-term and HM will ensure everything is in place over the next 2 weeks. Governors expressed their hope that HM does not take responsibility for health and safety in the long-term. The March FPP meeting will look at a replacement for KR as part of the next budget.	FPP

19	Any other business The annual soup lunch and talent show run by Friends of Dr South's will take place next Friday. This year, the community are asked to provide their own soup lunch but can buy tickets to then watch the talent show on-line. Information is to be circulated in the village, and governors will be e-mailed. Governors expressed their gratitude that the village remains very supportive of the school.	
	Meeting closed at: 8.50pm.	
	Dates of next meetings: LGB – Thursday 18th March at 7pm (20th May, Tues 20th July) T&L – Wednesday 10th March at 5pm (5th May, 12th July) FPP – Thursday 4th March at 7.30pm (6th May, Tues 6th July)	

*Indicates documents are associated with this item. *Italic text highlights governor questions, and the answers given.* **Bold text highlights action points arising from the meeting.**

Action points arising from the meeting

CM to leave a signed copy of the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2020 at school.

JC/MN to remain in contact with ODST on ODST tendering on behalf of schools.

HM to amend the wording in his head's report to reflect the changes that have occurred to the financial position of the school.

HM will look at ways to increase support for pupils on their return.

LH/HM to report back at the next meeting on the levels of upskilling in RE teaching required.

HM/CM to decide on the appropriate timing for a discussion on what governors expect of the school as a church school.

CM/HM to decide if the LGB will discuss the draft budget in March before formal approval in May.

Staff governors to consider what could be done, or what the school could invest in, to ensure staff have a complete break over Easter and the summer holidays.

CM to create his summary of governor views as a live document so that governors can add to it or amend it, and to add specific details for addressing some of the suggestions.

BT/CM to look at possible training programme subscriptions for governors.

All governors to undertake at least one training course by the May meeting.

All governors to complete safeguarding training on SmartLog.

All governors to keep their training record on GovernorHub up to date.

March FPP meeting to look at a replacement for KR as part of the next budget.