

**RENISHAW PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF GOVERNORS HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2021**

Present: Brian Ridgeway (Chairperson); Mathew Bullock, Stephen Forrest, Simon Fuller, Terri Homyard, Michelle Lewis, Sam Wardle,

In Attendance: John Whiteley (Clerk to the Governors)

**ACTION**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Julie Meiner who is not feeling well.

**2. Declaration of pecuniary interests relevant to this agenda**

Governors were asked to declare any pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda. No one declared any interests relevant to this agenda.

**3. Conduct of meetings in the coming year - whether to continue virtual attendance**

It was agreed that meetings will stay as virtual until further notice.

**4. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting and report on matters arising from the minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 be approved and signed.

**Matters arising from the minutes**

The Headteacher said that much has happened since the last meeting so he was confident that all agreed actions had been completed or were at least covered in his report.

The Chair said that he has been in regular contact with the Headteacher who has shared information with him regarding any issues and actions taken so he was confident that there are no issues that have not been addressed or would be of concern to Governors.

**5. Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's report was received and the following points were discussed:

SF said that it has been a difficult and that in some ways he has felt isolated during the current situation. He said that the situation has been

..... Chairperson

made worse because staff have not been allowed to meet each other because of the restrictions in place. He updated Governors explaining that half the staff have been in school and half have been at home organising the on line teaching

**5.1 Numbers update**

Numbers are increasing especially in the nursery and in Y3.

SF said that overall numbers are increasing which is good for the school going forward but can increase the safeguarding issues in school

He said that he wanted to acknowledge the part that Governors have played in the resurgence of the school as they supported the school when numbers were falling, which has now paid off as Nursery numbers are increasing and the future looks very healthy.

**5.2 Attendance**

SF explained that attendance is currently at 97.5% and there are currently 86 attending. There are 15 out of 26 Nursery children attending.

He explained that staff will be talking to parents to discuss the other children returning to school and to identify any issues that they may have regarding their return.

**5.3 Remote learning**

SF explained that a questionnaire had gone out to parents to get their views and that the majority of feedback has been positive. The positive feedback has been confirmed by Clive Worrall the schools advisor.

**5.4 Safeguarding**

SF said that the number of children with safeguarding issues has increased with referral numbers now at 14.

The Chair confirmed that he was made aware of a couple of serious incidents in school and wanted to say that it is good that staff are aware what to look for and will identify any issues that need following up.

He said that staff are aware that some children will have had a difficult time at home and will require help when they return.

SW said that she has signed up for a training course around psychology along with one of the TAs and will share this with other staff when the course has been completed. This will help staff to identify issues as early as possible.

SF said that the school has also agreed to share a cluster welfare officer with other schools in the area and that the advert is currently out. He said that this will improve the situation as the school has been covering this since the service ceased to be offered from the centre.

**5.5 Finance**

Governors were informed that the latest budget going forward looks much healthier and puts the school in a good position.

The Chair said that some money will need to be spent on the catch up agenda but with the extra money that will be received and the healthier budget position that the school finds itself in then this can be covered.

MB said that he has been through the figures and has identified some small issues that he will share with SF

MB

He said that the sickness refund was budgeted at £19k but will only be £8k which will affect the overall position.

Following a discussion Governors agreed that in future the dialogue in the figures should explain the reasons if the actual expenditure is different to the agreed budget to allow them to assess the reasons and if any action is needed.

Headteacher

SF said that going forward some money will need to be earmarked for issues relating to the premises.

SF explained that the catch up funding identified by the Govt relates to £80 per child so at £20 per hour this relates to 4 hours per child. He said that a new baseline needs to be agreed so that staff are aware of the gaps and what is needed to get individual children to where they need to be.

SF said that he has met with senior leaders who are aware of what they need to do.

MB asked if PP money can be used to help with the catch up work. SC said that it is usual that PP money is allocated to staffing as this is the best way of helping the vulnerable children so this will be part of the funding allocated to closing the gap.

He said that £1k per year is already allocated to boosters so staff need to ensure that the maximum impact is achieved from the resources available.

The Chair reiterated that views of Governors that staff need to be aware of what is expected of them if this is to work.

**5.6 Health and safety**

**Asbestos check.**

SC said that the school has received its 5 year asbestos check and that a sample of the infant block roof has been taken away for assessment. The Chair said that he feels that this will be OK because work was done on the roof which would have identified any issues at the time.

It was explained that the asbestos has now been removed from the boiler house.

**COVID testing.**

It was reported that all staff have now agreed to be tested twice per week and will test on Wednesdays and Sundays at 6pm to allow action to be taken the next day if bubbles need to shut.

SC explained that some staff have already been vaccinated and others will be done as soon as possible. A number of staff have been vaccinated because they teach vulnerable children.

**5.7 Staff CPD**

SW said that some training has taken place around improving reading

**6. Autumn data**

SC said that the Autumn data will give staff an idea of where the children were and further discussion will take place around what is needed going forward as discussed earlier.

The Chair asked if there could be any contentious issues around the baselining when it is complete. SC said that there are two groups that could be an issue which are Y3 and Y4. Y4 has had had problems with disturbed staffing and despite this were making progress so will need to be monitored.

SW said that Y4 have the highest number of children with special needs so this does introduce problems.

The Chair asked how the problems can be highlighted. SW explained that there is more Ed Psych time going in as well as dyslexia assessments to identify issues as soon as possible.

The Chair said that this must mean that there are multi levels of attainment within the groups and asked how this is managed for the better achievers. SW said that it is important that staff allocate time to catch work up as well as those better performers to ensure they are not held back.

SF said that there are 33 children with various issues including 10 disadvantaged, 9 SEN and a number of PP children.

SW said that it is difficult for staff to manage all the children and it may

be that some are so far behind that they will never catch up. SC said that to complicate this even further it is not always obvious where they need to catch up to so all staff can do is to get them to perform to the best of their ability.

SC said that to help the situation more hours have been allocated to this group and it may be that rather than just replacing staff consideration needs to be give as to where staff can be best utilised as with this particular group and extra hours allocated as required. The Chair said that he appreciates the difficulties facing staff and asked that Governors be kept up to date on progress.

**7. Remote learning**

SW said that it has been difficult for staff and there have been issues about some children not engaging.

SF said that the system is working in the majority of cases however things will not get any better until the children are back in school.

It was noted that the positive feedback from parents at Renishaw had been mentioned in the Derbyshire times. Governor agreed that the positive feedback that is around needs to be shared with staff. TH agreed to find the article from the newspaper and share this around.

TH

**8. SEN update**

SW said that the parents are now engaging much better and have confidence in what the staff are trying to do with their children. She said that getting feedback from the parents about what they want has been very positive and has allowed staff to plan to deliver the service required.

She said that this has been a good start which needs to be built on going forward and plans to set up a group to improve communication with parents.

Governors agreed that getting the views of parents to help plan what is on offer is the way forward and needs to continue.

SF said that the position around the SENCo has been strengthened and wanted Governors to be aware that SW has done a great job in getting the service to where it now is.

SW said that staff are now getting regular feedback from parents so they are aware of any issues outside school that may affect the children when they are in school.

SF said that plans are in place to fund a breakfast club that would allow PP children to come in early to get them ready for the day ahead.

He said that the funding required to support the breakfast club will need to be built into the budget.

The Chair said that staff need to look beyond COVID and plan for the future.

SW explained that there are now 43 children on role with a recognised need. She said that speech and language is a major concern which has been made worse by the lack of support from the centre during the current situation. In answer to a question from the Chair SW said that staff have had to introduce their own initiatives to help improve the situation.

The Chair said that if the support from the centre does not improve then the school needs to consider how the in house provision can be improved and it may be that discussions can take place with other schools to see if they have similar issues and may want to look at a shared service.

SF/SW

SW said that consideration will also need to be given to mental health support especially when the children return. She said that mental health ambassadors from the students is one initiative and some funding has been secured already. In addition to this staff training is also an area that needs to be investigated so they know what to look for.

SF said that a member of staff in Y5 has been asked to work an extra day to strengthen this area.

The Chair asked how staff go about identifying children who need help and suggested that this be done as a whole school initiative rather than individuals or individual classes. SW said that this has already started with the introduction of zones of regulation which is intended to help children cope.

SW said that there is a psychology student who is doing a remote placement and she has been asked to lead on a project around positive mind set.

SF said that two year groups are also doing mindfulness sessions.

He said that it is obvious that some families are struggling and it is important that staff work with them to offer the support required. He made reference to the shared support post that has been advertised explaining that the cost to the school will depend on the time allocated.

Governors said that this must be closely monitored as it is important that the hours received reflect the charge.

9. **Wellbeing of staff**

SF said that staff will be brought together to agree where the school goes from here. The Chair asked who deals with staff welfare. SF said that he leads on this but shares some of the responsibility with other senior staff.

He said that Governors also have a part to play and should talk to their assigned staff to offer support and get feedback.

**10. Interactive board approval**

SF said that he now has two out of the three required quotes to replace the boards. The Chair said that it is important that this goes ahead and it was agreed that the quotes with a recommendation on the way forward should come to the next meeting.

SF

**11. Policies for approval**

**Governors formally approved and adopted the following policies.**

- Equality impact assessment
- Attainment progress matrix
- Zoom code of conduct

**12. Review of the meeting – how has the Governing Board fulfilled the three core functions for which it is responsible?**

Governors fulfilled their three core function discussion the following areas.

- Numbers
- Attendance
- Safeguarding
- Home learning
- Finance and budgets
- Staffing issues
- Policy approval
- Wellbeing of children and staff
- SEN issues in school
- Structures

**13. Confidential items**

Governors agreed that no issues discussed would be considered to be of a confidential nature.

**14. Any Other Urgent Business**

**14.1 Office structure**

SC said that he has tried to move this on by sending a list of the required duties for the post to HR to agree on a grade for the job. He said that the school does need a business manager if it is to be effective so the structure needs to be agreed to include such a post.

MB said that looking at the difference in cost between a grade 8 and 9 in view of the advice from HR he would recommend that the post when agreed should be a grade 9.

Governors agreed that the other support in the office needs to be

considered to ensure that the business manager can do what she is paid to do and offer the school a more strategic support role rather than day to day admin/clerical support.

SC said that a similar role was previously introduced which did not work as the roles in school were not correctly defined which caused some problems, so it is important that this is done correctly this time.

It was agreed that when this post is in place, the business manager in future should have a responsibility to report to Governors.

It was agreed that to move this forward SF and MB will look at the various options, cost these up and then consider the implications that each option will have on the budget and bring these to the next meeting for consideration and approval by Governors.

SF/MB

**14.2 Caretaking update**

SF said that there have already been 9 applications received and he was looking for a Governor to support the interviews. MB said that subject to when the interviews are he would support the process.

SF said that he is still trying to firm up the situation in the kitchen following the interviews.

**14.3 PTFA**

TH wanted to bring to the attention of Governors that some funding has been spent but due to lockdown fund raising has been difficult.

She said that some money has been spent on the heathy minds project and any money left will go towards the tram track.

She said that money is still available to support a defribulator in school which will be dedicated to Mrs Bentley.

Governors asked if she is involved with the poly tunnel. SF said that the EYFS team and Miss Morgan are looking into this but that it would be good if the PTFA could support this in some way.

TH said that at Christmas every family was sent a card with a Kit Kat and a tea bag enclosed which was well received.

**14.4 SENCo training update**

The Chair said that it would be useful for Governors to receive feedback on the SENCo course attended by SW. She agreed to feedback as soon as possible.

SW

**15. Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

..... Chairperson

Resolved: That the next meeting be held on 26 march 2021 at 5-00 p.m.

**Meeting closed at 6-55 p.m.**