



Minutes of a meeting of the Local Board

held on Wednesday 13th May 2020 at 7:00 pm
remotely via TEAMS due to the social distancing regulations imposed by HM Government
due to the international Covid19 pandemic.

Local Board Members Present: Mrs Alice Allen (Chair) Mrs Hannah Baty
Mrs Claire Cleverton Mr Daniel Curtis
Miss Caroline Newton Mr Stephen Sowden-Mabbott
Mr Marcus Still (Principal)

In attendance: Mrs Kathy Jerbi (Clerk)
Mrs Vanessa Smith (Vice Principal)

Apologies: Mr Adrian Alcock

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES for ABSENCE

Mrs Allen thanked all for bringing this meeting forward by one week owing to the current situation & recent government update. Apologies accepted by the Local Board.

2 DECLARATION of INTEREST by LB MEMBERS in ANY ITEM on the AGENDA

None.

3 VIRTUAL MEETING GROUND RULES

As per the agenda: agreed by all members present.

4.1 MINUTES of PREVIOUS MEETING – 29th January 2020

Were agreed as being a true record by the LB. The Clerk to gain the signature of the Chair when possible.

4.2 ACTION POINTS from above meeting and MATTERS ARISING

1 Make class visit & report to LB – various class visits were conducted before the academy closed on 20th March. Mrs Allen reminded members to file reports with the Clerk if they have not already done so. Reports to be considered at a future meeting.

Action 1: all
Action 2: KJ

2 Circulate link to equalities training to all LBM's. COMPLETED by the Clerk.

3 Send 'Trust Induction Checklist' to Mrs Pinfield. COMPLETED by the Clerk.

4 Report to the LB on further support available from Parentkind through the Trust. Mr Still reported that a representative from Parentkind was due to attend a Trust SMT meeting but did not present. He expects this to be picked up again by the Trust in due course & will advise accordingly.

5 Ensure update of our Community Engagement Strategy appears as an agenda item at March meeting. The March meeting was cancelled due to Covid19. The Strategy is unlikely to be ready for September. Item to be scheduled for our next face-to-face meeting.

Action 3: KJ

6 Agree a timeline for recruitment process & submit LL article. COMPLETED.

7 Ensure PSHE subject lead is invited to March meeting & RSE Policy consultation is an agenda item. Again, the March meeting was cancelled. The consultation with stakeholders has not yet taken place & it is assumed that the statutory requirement to have the new policy in place by September will be delayed. To be picked up again in due course.

Action 4: MS

5 LOCAL BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Mrs Pinfield's resignation as co-opted LB member took effect on 3rd April. Mrs Allen recorded a vote of thanks to Mrs Pinfield for her three years of voluntary work on the LB, in particular in the field of Safeguarding. Mrs Allen will take on the Safeguarding Link role on the LB for the time being.

A recruitment advertisement appeared in the March edition of the Lindfield Life magazine, which generated three candidates. Mrs Allen, Mrs Cleverton & Mr Still have conducted virtual interviews with the candidates, using the same questions & ranking system as used in the December recruitment round, as two candidates from that round have expressed an interest in standing for appointment again this time. Mrs Allen asked members to consider whether our skillset requirement might have changed due to challenges the academy will face as a result of the pandemic, e.g. funding: the PTA have not been able to hold fund-raising events this term, which could result in a drop of £20,000 in donations. At this time, would the LB benefit most from a member with strong educational background or strong community focus. Mrs Allen to discuss with Mr Sowden-Mabbott how the LB can best support the PTA & then make her recommendation to the LB regarding candidates.

Action 5: AIA

6 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Wellbeing & welfare of pupils, staff & stakeholders.

- **Pupils.** Mr Still reported that staff have done a sterling job checking the welfare of pupils, making sure we have contact with every child each week – whether that be work or emails received, telephone calls made or welfare visits to the home. Every pupil is accounted for each week. Recently staff have been receiving an increase in emails from parents voicing concerns about their children, thus SLT time is increasingly being spent on these issues, as class teachers should not have to. Our process has evolved – whereas previously the SLT were meeting to discuss individual children, now the use of CPOMS is being more widely used to record conversations & actions taken so that all are kept in the loop. It is time-consuming, but essential & productive. All vulnerable children are accounted for. More have been invited into school recently & they have attended.
- **Staff.** Some staff are shielding. Some staff have developed symptoms, been tested, but thankfully proved negative for Covid19. We are strictly following Government & Trust guidance. All staff are accounted for. Mrs Smith added that the SLT have been keeping regular contact with all staff & working to ensure staff well-being. Again, it is time-consuming but well worth it. The SLT have also ensured on-line training is accessible to staff.
- **Stakeholders.** The SLT remain in regular contact with the LB via the Chair. Also, with the PTA – they have held a couple of virtual meetings with the co-Chairs & were involved in the sad decision this week to cancel all scheduled PTA events for the remainder of the summer term. The co-Chairs have reported being inundated with resulting emails from parents expressing their support for this decision. The SLT have tried to maintain a balance of keeping parents abreast of information without swamping them with too much. Again, this has been time-consuming, but essential & appreciated.

Planning that is being undertaken with regards to a possible phased re-opening of the academy from 1st June.

- The SLT have all been in school to undertake necessary planning.
- It feels that the Government guidance is not clear.
- The Trust have been very supportive. Twice weekly Mr Still meets virtually with the other Principals in the Trust to share information/ideas.
- They have raised several questions with Trust leadership, who are taking the questions back to the DfE on behalf of the academies.
- The SLT feel they have a plan in place now for the arrival of children, but it is still evolving.
- Teaching unions are due to meet with the Government on 14th May; there is concern amongst teachers, (not necessarily ours), about their own safety. At this moment in time, Mr Still was not convinced about staff or pupil safety being at the heart of guidance, which is a main aim of the SLT.

- The 9 classes due to return (Years R, 1 & 6) will each be split in 2, thus requiring 18 classrooms. As we anticipate the number of key worker children will increase, they will require use of the remaining 3 classrooms.
- Home learning for the children still at home also needs to be considered. The Government guidance appears to imply that home learning should also be available for those children in Year R, 1 & 6 who choose to remain at home, which Mr Still feels is an unreasonable expectation of the staff.
- Pupil arrival times will be staggered between 8.30 and 10am. Each class will be given a 15-minute period to arrive & be taken to class to keep the pathways free-flowing.
- There is also parent expectation to manage.
- Once in school the SLT are confident we can manage the children: one-way systems will be in place, split playtimes & lunchtimes. The Trust are going to ask Chartwells to provide packed lunches in place of hot meals in order that children can eat in classrooms to reduce movement around the academy.
- Managing behaviour is going to be a challenge.
- The Trust have advised that the academy should close completely for the half term break (25-29May) & that the planned INSET day on 1st June should be cancelled.
- Mr Still's main concerns are the mental welfare of the children & the welfare of staff.
- Questions are being asked about the use of PPE.
- Planning has not yet been shared with staff as it is in its infancy, but it will be in the next few days.
- Mr Still wants all staff to know plans/expectations & to have the classrooms prepared by 22nd May so that all can have a complete break during half term.
- He also needs to be sure which staff will be available to work: most available staff will be required in school, with just a few working from home to maintain home learning & respond to children's emails.
- Some locality schools appear to be splitting attendance between am/pm or days of the week. Mr Still has asked the Trust about this possibility.
- Currently this is the planning for 5 weeks; in July the Government expects all children to return to school, which will result in no social distancing.

LB questions & responses from Mr Still:

Q. will we get support with cleaning of the academy?

A. yes, a cleaning team is in place; cost is not an issue, it just must be done. All areas of the academy have already been deep cleaned. Cloakrooms will not be used. Staff will be required to de-clutter classrooms to ease movement around them.

Q. how should the LB respond to parents who have concerns about sending children in when they have other siblings who will remain at home?

A. Government guidance simply states that children in other year groups should be pointed towards home learning resources. It states that attendance is expected of children in Years R, 1 & 2, but there will be no penalty for non-attendance & home learning will be available should they choose to stay at home. We currently don't know how many children will attend – this raises difficulty in resourcing both the classrooms & the home learning.

Q. The Chair asked Mr Still to convey the support of the LB to the staff.

A. Mr Still stated that on 20,21,22 May all staff will be asked to attend school to prepare the classrooms – he suggested that if LB members were available to assist their help would be greatly appreciated.

Q. Members expressed concern over staff morale & wellbeing – they will be expected to teach classes in school, not necessarily from their own year group, as well as plan work for their own year group - & on top of not having had a break at Easter.

A. Mr Still stated that we are fortunate to have a large site with lots of space, as well as a willing staff.

Miss Newton added from a staff perspective (she is a TA) that there has been great morale & camaraderie amongst the staff teams working in school with the key worker & vulnerable children. She feels really supported by the SLT.

Parent LB members relayed positive feedback from parents with regards to the home learning & communication with teachers. They feel the SLT is doing a fantastic job.

7 SAFEGUARDING

Update on the safeguarding arrangements made in response to Covid 19.

- **DSL.** Mr Still stated that Mrs Robinson, DSL & SENCo, has been phenomenal in this aspect. At the closure of the academy she drew up a list of our vulnerable children & those on the cusp of being considered vulnerable to be monitored. She has communicated regularly with staff to ensure contact is being made with those children. As mentioned in item 6, all concerns, communications & actions are now being recorded on CPOMS. Mrs Robinson has also hosted a SEND coffee morning on ZOOM & has held virtual meetings with parents of SEND children to offer support. Her provision for SEND children has been outstanding.

- **Site security.** Only the main gate near the office has been in use. The office staff have maintained control of entry & exit.
- **Re-opening of school.** A major concern of the SLT is how some children who have been attending school as key worker/vulnerable children will adapt to be back in 'normal' school – it will be a challenge for some. The children who have been attending school have not had a break either! Staff will focus on 'behaviour for learning' with all the children once back in school.

Questions from LB members & responses from Mr Still:

Q. will support be given to children who have slipped behind?

A. school on 1st June will be very different to normal; we will not be delivering the normal curriculum; we must wait & see how it goes.

Q. in September careful transition will be required for EY children to Year 1?

A. yes, children will not have reached GLD. But this will be the same throughout the school & for all schools. We await Government advice regarding assessment.

Q. the quality of the home learning provided by LPA has gone a long way to close the gap.

A. staff will do their best to bridge any gaps.

Car park. Mr Still raised the issue of the car park once again. He feels this would be a good time to make the car park completely out-of-bounds to parents based on child safety. The LB supported this idea. Members asked if the Trust will fund a barrier to the entrance/exit. Mr Still replied no, but that he would like to amend the Car Parking & Vehicle Access (CPVA) Policy. The clerk advised any change to the policy would have to be approved by the LB at a meeting, not via email. Mr Still to circulate suggested amended version of the policy ahead of the Board's next meeting. **Action 6: MS**

8 How have we improved the outcomes for children at LPA in this meeting?

Covered under items 6 & 7.

9 A.O.B.

None.

10 DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING

Members discussed the possibility of meeting again quite quickly because of the ever-changing situation. It was agreed to meet during the second week of June (if not required before then) to learn how the re-opening of the academy is progressing, if it happens. (Date & time to be confirmed). The LB to be on stand-by in case an urgent meeting is required in the meantime.

Mrs Allen thanked Mr Still & Mrs Smith for their superb leadership during this extraordinary period & asked that the LB's thanks be passed on to all the staff for their hard work.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

ACTION POINTS:

ACTION POINT NUMBER	MINUTE ITEM NUMBER	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
1	4.2	File class visit report if not already done so	All	asap
2	4.2	Ensure class visit reports appear on agenda of a future meeting	Mrs Jerbi	Next face to face meeting
3	4.2	Ensure update of our Community Engagement Strategy appears on agenda of a future meeting.	Mrs Jerbi	Next face to face meeting
4	4.2	Advise re new timescales/requirements for RSE Policy consultation/implementation	Mr Still	As applicable
5	5	Make recommendation to LB re candidates for LBM position	Mrs Allen	asap
6	7	Make suggested amendments to CPVA Policy & circulate to LB	Mr Still	Next meeting

Signed as being a true and accurate account of the meeting:

..... **Date:**

Name: Mrs Alice Allen Position: Chair of Local Board of Lindfield Primary Academy