



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Woodfield Community Primary School  
Held virtually, 28 April 2020, 6.00pm**

**Present:** Mathew Atkinson (MA) – Acting Executive Head Teacher  
Jo Marwood (JM) – Acting Head of School  
Bridget Tayan (BT) - Joint Chair  
Paul Haslam (PH) – Joint Chair  
Jonathan Spruce (JS)  
Jan Tringham (JT)  
Victoria Lack (VL)  
Louise Downend (LD)

**In attendance:** Karen Butler (KB) – School Education Advisor (SEA)  
Chris Walker (CW) – Clerk

Governing Body functions:

Ensuring the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined

Ensuring that the Headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school

Ensuring the sound and proper and efficient use of the school's financial resources

No.	Agenda Item	Part 'A' – Procedural	Action
-----	-------------	-----------------------	--------

<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<p>PH chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone.</p> <p>PH introduced Mathew Atkinson (MA) who had joined the school, as Acting Executive Head. MA introduced himself and set out his extensive experience within the educational sector, both as an LEA Advisor and as a Head Teacher at a number of schools.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	None	
<b>3</b>	<b>Identification of confidential items</b>	To be considered as the meeting progressed.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Identification of urgent other business</b>	PH highlighted the parent responses to the Exit Survey which would be considered at Item 12.	
<b>5</b>	<b>To remind governors of the need to declare interests, pecuniary or non-pecuniary.</b>	None to declare.	
<b>6</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the meeting on 25 February 2020.</b>	<p>Governors approved the minutes and confidential minutes from the 24 March 2020 meeting which were signed as an accurate record, subject to a number of amendments; the positions of Headteacher to be amended to Acting Headteacher and Acting Head of School and any subsequent references amended accordingly. All late arrivals or early exits to be noted in the minutes.</p> <p>The clerk had been advised that confidential minutes cannot be approved electronically. All confidential minutes will be approved and signed at the first physical meeting of the Governing Body.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	<p>KB confirmed that no further advice had been received with regard to the suspension of the admissions process during the current crisis.</p> <p>JM clarified that of those children who had left the school 9 or 10 had now officially moved to Grove Road and were off roll. 3 other pupils were in the process of applying to other schools but were still on</p>	

		<p>the roll at Woodfield. JM confirmed that the school was in contact with these families to provide support and advice.</p> <p>PH confirmed that it had not been possible to set up a Zoom meeting for all parents but that a script had been prepared and an exit questionnaire had been given to all those parents who had removed their children from the school.</p> <p>MA confirmed that the LA had agreed to finance the new fencing and the school was awaiting the contractors to start work – the current crisis was impacting on the start of work.</p> <p>All other items had been completed or were covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	
		<b>Part 'C' – School Improvement</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Headteacher's Report</b>	<p>Governors had been provided with the Headteacher's Report in advance of the meeting. MA and JM talked through the key points in the Report and invited questions as they went along. Key points included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing a learning focus for pupils in the morning with the emphasis on well-being in the afternoon</li> <li>- Staff support and engagement had been excellent</li> <li>- Feedback from families had been very positive; the daily contact and support from the school had been especially welcomed</li> <li>- The introduction of Edenred had been challenging but all families were now receiving their allocations</li> <li>- Home learning packs have been prepared for pupils using the school website and also hard copies have been prepared. A culture of no pressure or telling off for poor performance has been implemented.</li> <li>- When pupils return the aim will be to pick up from the point where they are at; any gaps will have to be addressed where identified.</li> </ul>	

- The well-being of staff has also been a key focus. Staff are currently focused on developing the curriculum. Matt Boyle is leading on this work. MA and JM meet with Matt on a weekly basis to discuss progress and ensure links are made to the School Action Plan.
- The current environment has increased the challenge in trying to delivery all the required actions.

Governor questions

Q: Do you have a system to ensure that all pupils are contacted and none slip through the net?

A: Yes. Class teachers ensure that all the pupils on their registers are contacted. All contact is recorded on CPOMs to ensure that no one is missed.

Q: Have you had any feedback from parents about the home learning in terms of its quantity and quality?

A: Feedback has tended to be positive. Some parents have had a few technical problems trying to access the material through the log ins. Parents have been invited to contact the class teachers directly if there have any specific questions.

Q: Will we be in a good position when the children return to school?

A: In terms of any social distancing requirements the school will be ideally positioned due to its size and current class sizes. There might be some challenges around staffing ratios – we will need to assess our staffing levels on a continuous basis. Currently there would be 3 teachers available if the school was to open now. In addition, there would be a number of support staff.

3 or 4 classes

MA had provided governors with a table setting out the pros and cons of both a three and a four class structure from September 2020. Governors discussed the options in some detail. The expected pupil number for September was 60.

The three-class option would consist of

- Nursery/reception and Year 1
- Years 2 /3/4
- Years 5/6

		<p>The four-class option would consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Nursery and reception</li><li>- Y 1/2</li><li>- Y 3/4</li><li>- Y 5/6</li></ul> <p>The pupil split would be roughly equal in the three-class configuration i.e. c20 pupils in each class.</p> <p>Governors expressed some concerns with the three-class model;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- in particular that the age groupings were quite large (3 year groups in 2 of the classes) and this would not be well-received by either current or new parents</li><li>- This model would also disadvantage the school in comparison to other similar schools in Harrogate, again making it difficult to attract new parents to the school</li><li>- Would the large age ranges in one class impact on learning?</li><li>- The school had already undertaken significant changes every year; should the focus now be on stability?</li></ul> <p>KB reported that the proposed three class model was not an uncommon structure within the county and there was no evidence that it had had a detrimental impact on either teaching or on attracting pupils to the school. The class sizes were still small, at 20, compared to many other schools.</p> <p>In addition, the three-class model would enable the employment of a specialist teacher such as a forest school leader, which would have a number of benefits for the pupils.</p> <p><u>Governor questions</u></p> <p>Q: Could you clarify the point highlighted in the cons that smaller classes might potentially have a negative impact on pupils' wellbeing?</p> <p>A: There is some evidence which indicates that pupils are not able to form the same level of friendships within smaller cohorts or develop the same level of social interactions. As a consequence, they do not tend to thrive as they would in larger classes.</p>	
--	--	---	--

		<p>When considering the options governors were mindful of the financial position of the school. The school had previously opted for the 4-class model based on a forecast pupil number of 69/71. The current number would be 60; this would have a significant impact on the budget, causing a significant reduction income from what had previously been expected and planned for. Governors considered whether the budget could still support 4 classes or would it be better to opt for the three-class model and use any surplus monies to support teaching and learning across the school for these three classes.</p> <p>Governors also wondered whether it would be possible for the Headteacher to undertake some teaching to support the four-class option. Would the four-class option and the smaller classes help to support the teaching and learning of the pupils and speed up the process of getting the school out of special measures?</p> <p>KB reminded governors that the decision on class structures was a matter for the Governing Body and not for the LA to decide.</p> <p>Governors agreed that further consideration was required and that in order to help form a decision it would be helpful for the bursar to provide two budgetary scenarios;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One based on a 3-class structure</li> <li>- One based on a 4-class structure</li> </ul> <p>Governors agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May at 6.00pm to make a decision.</p> <p>Governors were additionally mindful that there would be staffing implications dependent on what option was agreed. If recruitment was required then ideally a decision was required by the end of May in order to ensure that the teacher resignation cut off dates were met.</p>	<b>MA/PH to liaise with bursar</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Finance</b>	Governors agreed to defer the approval of the start budget to the next meeting on 19 May.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Updates</b>	MA informed governors that he would be discussing any potential extension of contract of the current Acting Head of School, JM, at the end of May.	

		There was a confidential discussion about the welfare of a current staff member. A separate confidential minute has been prepared for this item.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Governor</b>	<p>MA informed governors that all staff had been invited to apply for the vacant staff governor position. There had been one application. In this situation, this candidate would automatically become the staff governor for four years, with immediate effect.</p> <p>PH/BT informed governors that the nominated candidate for the vacant LA Governor position had not been able to join the GB for at least a further 12 months due to his employment regulations. KB agreed to liaise with the LA to try and expedite a new candidate.</p> <p>MA informed governors that the latest NGA guidance informed governing bodies not to undertake any parent elections during the current crisis. Therefore, it would not be possible to begin to recruit to the two current vacancies until the school was back running normally.</p>	<b>KB</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	<p>PH had circulated an exit questionnaire to all those parents who had removed their pupils from the school to take them elsewhere. Four questionnaires had been completed and sent back and had been shared with governors in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Governors noted that the letters were critical of the school in a number of key areas which can be grouped as communication, change and consistency. Governors accepted a number of the criticisms that had been made. However, it was important to note that the governing body had been forced to make all the various changes as a result of external factors which could not have been planned for and which were beyond the control of the governing body. Governors had done all in their power to communicate all the changes to parents at the earliest possible moment including the arrangement of Parent Forums. Governors agreed that maybe more could be done to communicate the role of the governing body and how it functions to help parents understand how decisions are made. Governors asked that MA/JM address the specific points about parents being worried about their kids feeling unsafe and that there appeared to be no consequences of poor behaviour.</p> <p>MA/JM agreed to follow up all the points that were made but reminded governors of all the progress that had been made with regard to behaviour, particularly when Jonny Davies joined the school. The behaviour policy had been completely revamped in an inclusive way and all staff and pupils were</p>	

		<p>aware of the standards of behaviour required. The impact had been significant and quick and improvements could be seen immediately. The behaviour culture in the school had improved significantly and would continue to be built upon.</p> <p>MA/JM agreed to ensure that the administrative arrangements for Free School Meals / Pupil Premium entitlement would be tightened up and where possible parents informed of any entitlement.</p> <p>Governors thanked PH for undertaking this task which reinforced the excellent communication that the school has with parents and the local community.</p>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Health and Safety</b>	Item 8 refers	
<b>14</b>	<b>Safeguarding</b>	Item 8 refers	
<b>17</b>	<b>AOB</b>	<p>Governors noted their thanks to Jonny Davies, the previous Acting Headteacher, who had now returned to his old school. Jonny had had a significant impact at the school in his short time in post.</p> <p>Governors also wanted to note their thanks to Amanda Simmons and Peter Freeman who had both resigned as long -serving teachers at the school. Governors thanked both Amanda and Peter for all their hard work and support for the school over a significant number of years.</p> <p>PH agreed to update the governor pages on the school website.</p> <p>Governors agreed to discuss the Road Map at the next meeting. KB explained that the LA had completed its support plan which now needed to be aligned with the school's plan.</p>	<b>PH</b>

**Signed:**

**Position:**

**Date:**