

GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY & SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Wednesday 15TH July 2020 10.30am
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Minutes

Present:

Mr G Johnson	Headteacher
Ms J Pepper	Chair of Governors
Mr R Williamson	Chair Resources Committee
Mr T Drake	Vice Chair of Governors
Mr P Southward	Governor
Mr T Sulman	Governor
Mrs S Dowey	Governor
Mrs H Halliday	Deputy Headteacher / Associate Governor
Mrs C Sarney	School Business Manager
Miss V Lewis	Clerk

1. **Updates from School**

GJ: We know that school is reopening fully in September as it stands at present. We have updated our risk assessment for the September bubbles and procedures, they will be sent for Union approval today.

Action: None Required.

2. **Preparations / Updates for September**

Matt Blyton has advised that our planned year group Bubbles would be large at 120 so HH, CS and VG have redesigned the procedures and timetabling so that year groups are split into two smaller bubble of 60 for all playtimes/lunchtimes. For lesson time classes will remain in their class bubble.

HH: The children will be in Bubbles of up to 60 for play and lunch times. All 120 will be out at the same time but the outside space will be split / restricted so each 60 has their own area. Not ideal as the space will be limited and the lack of joint activities such as assemblies etc will mean a lack of mixing. Also means that PE provision is slightly restricted but until the situation changes we need to operate like this. Also, because we won't be operating our phonics groups etc due to not mixing we need to look at adjusting provision. Meeting with staff to go through procedures before the Summer to iron out issues and queries.

GJ: the main issue with larger Bubbles is that if we did happen to have a symptomatic child it would affect the whole year group.

GJ: Matt also raised that we aren't serving hot dinners during the first half term which, from the guidance, we should be. However, I'm standing by the original decision as I don't feel from a health and safety viewpoint I can't see how we can safely and logistically offer hot meals. The corridors aren't wide enough for queueing, there isn't enough space to socially distance the dining tables etc.

GJ: with regard to facemasks the guidance states that staff aren't required to wear facemasks. However we have said that if staff want to wear a facemask when dealing with children in close quarters for extended amounts of time (first aid etc) they can. With the recent announcement about wearing masks in shops we will have to see how it goes with parents wanting children to wear them in school. Let's see what happens, don't really want to have this as a battle with parents.

JP: any sense from parents about their feelings regarding children returning in September?

GJ: so much positive feedback from parents, about our dealing with the crisis and also our communications and planning. Some parents are understandably anxious – particularly those whose children haven't been in during lockdown and since re-opening to YR, Y1 and Y6.

JP: I understand the concerns of Matt Blyton but we face logistical difficulties at the best of times so we must do what we can in the best way possible for the school. The bit that worries me is that it will be stressful for children and staff. We just need to support as best we can, accept that it will be tricky at times but appreciate the efforts in place.

HH: we have managed to organise the school's procedures so that teachers' days have not been extended beyond the normal hours and also safeguarded lunchtime. We've managed to stay as close as possible to the usual day format so hopefully staff will feel supported by this.

JP: Risk Assessment – do governors need to sign off?

GJ: VL to circulate for governor information.

GJ: In weekly communication with Unions which includes details of my communications to staff and updates to the risk assessment. All feedback has been positive. The only change to the RA is pretty much the change to Bubble sizes. I think the RA will come as a bit of shock to some schools but for us it was about tweaking the logistics – no small feat but far less onerous than for some schools.

TD: if the plan is to use the MUGA for games – what will happen if the weather is bad?

HH: will be indoor (in the hall) but we are trying to avoid using the hall where possible.

GJ: astro-turf being installed over the summer also.

RW: which area being astro-turfed?

HH: the fenced MUGA in the Upper School lower level yard.

RW: what about greening some of the rest of the playground? Would be nice to look at some of the proposed work from before Covid 19 involving students in playground planning.

GJ: long term plan yes. This is a more immediate September improvement. Lots to come.

RW: I thought the letter to parents with information about September was excellent. Informative, reassuring and the right tone.

GJ: our parents appreciate upfront, honest and open.

JP: it goes both ways and sets up for positive relationships and communication.

Action: Circulate updated Risk Assessment (September) to Governors By: VL

3. Draft SDP / Dates for Diary 2020 / 2021

JP: have all governors had chance to look at the dates for meetings and the proposals for governance circulated last week? We may need to have a 'blended' version of online and face to face meetings. We can discuss further in September but this will give governors an idea of the broad planning and the proposed systems.

RW: do you think there should be something in the SDP specific to the issues raised by Covid and how we are going to manage the children's return, catch up etc? Just a thought.

JP: its whether it needs to be part of the SDP or whether it can be more part of an internal management plan. As governors we are monitoring and certainly Covid response will continue to be on the meeting agendas moving forward. One of the reasons for setting the dates and circulating information now is so that we can complete all required annual tasks at the September meeting very quickly and then use the majority of time to discuss planning, provision, response and governance matters.

GJ: I agree we need a plan in place but the first stage is to get the children back into school, settled, in routine and see what we're getting back. Fingers crossed, much of what we are seeing is that many pupils have retained. For September will come up with a list of measures and targets we can use to plan our return to school response.

JP: its about acknowledging the time spent away from school but not seeing it automatically as a deficit of learning. What have children learned from the lockdown? May not be as negative as we think for all children.

HH: the first week back we are having a whole school theme based on the book 'We all Fall Down' which is about how Humpty Dumpty deals with the after effects of falling off the wall. Obviously this is a parallel to children's responses and feelings about Covid, the lockdown, returning to school etc. Classes will be undertaking tasks and activities based on this same resource/story.

JP: all make sense re dates etc to governors?

Yes

Action: None Required.

4. **Next meeting**

The next meeting, and the first of the 2020/21 school year, will hopefully be at school on Tuesday 22nd September at 5.30pm. We will hopefully be able to meet in person socially distanced in the school hall with options for attendees to link by remote means if they wish. Complete the start of year business as quickly as possible to then spend time focussing on how the start of the year has gone. More information about meeting arrangements will follow in early September.

Action: None Required.

5. **A.O.B.**

GJ: if children present with symptoms in school we have decided to take that responsibility from teaching and support staff. What is going to happen is that if there are any concerns the SLT will be alerted and will deal with the situation on a situational basis. This might be observing the child in situ for a short period or if necessary escalating measures re isolation etc.

RW: had a look through the budget management report circulated this week. From what I see it looks like things are generally in line with what we expected?

CS: no massive surprises. Trying to confirm the free school meal charges as county are being a bit vague about it - there are vouchers, meals served in school etc. Trying to finalise the figure from County.

JP: what are the arrangements re FSM pupils' holiday vouchers?

CS: all eligible pupils have had 7 weeks vouchers ordered for the holidays. Then the scheme will end as far as I am aware.

JP: I just want to thank everyone for their hard work in this very unprecedented and unusual situation. We have been through a lot in the last 12 months! Thank you to the governors for their input but also the school staff who have worked extraordinarily in such difficult situations. The school pulled together so well and we are getting such amazing feedback. Please pass on to the staff but I will send something for them on behalf of the GB.

Action: Letter of thanks to staff from GB to be circulated

By: JP / VL

Ended at 11.25am