

## GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

### MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY & SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 1.00pm  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

#### Minutes

##### Present:

Mr G Johnson	Headteacher
Ms J Pepper	Chair of Governors
Mr R Williamson	Chair Resources Committee
Ms C Govan	Chair School Improvement Committee
Mr R Brearley	Governor
Mr T Drake	Vice Chair of Governors
Mrs S Dowey	Governor
Mrs J McLeod	Governor / PSWO
Mrs H Halliday	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs C Sarney	School Business Manager
Mrs K Hill	Teacher / Associate Governor
Miss V Lewis	Clerk

#### **1. Government Guidelines - what we are being asked to do and take into account.**

##### **School Risk Assessment – what measures are being taken to ensure safe wider participation – implications for staff, children, parents**

DfE Guidance and various other guideline previously circulated.

Comments re what we are being asked to consider – concerns etc:

CS: in terms of physical space we have set up the classrooms being used for the Bubbles from 1<sup>st</sup> June. All rooms being used are in Upper School - can only just fit 10 desks in a room and if strictly 2m then really can only fit 9 desks – we have stretched it to fit 10. In KS1 where the rooms are smaller we would only be able to fit 6-7. No way we could have 3 year groups and all key worker children in. Maximum would be around 250 on the whole site. Has been extremely difficult. Timetable for staggering entry, playtimes, lunchtimes and tying in cleaning schedule. It's a push even with 8 groups.

HH: because of the tight site we can't section outdoors space to use for outdoor learning either. Once times are staggered it's a real challenge.

CS: to provide half an hour outside socially distanced time we would need a long time.

JP: there isn't the expectation of 2m distance for the youngest children. But it is still difficult to achieve any sort of 'space' in the smaller classrooms.

HH: government guidance says that but union guidance says if staff can't access 2 m distancing they can refuse to come into school.

JP: the way you have to work with the youngest children contradicts the needs and ability to teach. Very difficult to see how we could work in a useful and non-stressful way.

HH: spoke with Sarah Stuart (EYFS Leader) today – she is asking for the resources she wants from 1<sup>st</sup> June but we have had to refuse due to cleaning standards. No fabrics and soft toys etc allowed.

RW: year group breakdown?

CS: key workers in at the moment. Returning workers will be added to this. Different split of year group attendees each day.

GJ: has been checked for eligibility but its difficult - rely on trust. Numbers creeping up daily. 43 today.

RW: so at present capacity is 80?

GJ: there will be 8 bubbles of 10 but not all 80 children attend each day. Children will stay within their bubbles – no mixing.

RW: how are we allocating the 80?

CS: 80 children requested a place for at least one day and we must provide that place for all 5 days in case they appear (ie. Can't have one child using a place Monday / Tuesday and a second child using the same place on Wednesday – Friday).

GJ: very ad hoc.

HH: some key workers up to 01/06 have been able to work from home but many now being expected to go into work. Most of the children are key worker children.

RW: so if the guidance doesn't change we essentially can't get all the children back into school?

HH: yes.

CS: other issue is over 25% staff are shielding, though not isolating due to symptoms.

TD: how supportive has the LA been?

HH: very.

GJ: zoom meeting yesterday with LA link Matt Blyton. LA are of the opinion Heads must do what is best for schools on a case by case basis. The LA is opening schools but it will be on a school safety basis. Check in regularly, very interested in vulnerable groups and monitoring.

HH: unless the unions and government say no social distancing and extreme cleaning schedule then we cannot have any more than 250 children in.

CS: imagine the dinner queue of 120 children then 2m distanced!

TD: making sure there's no pushback for the school to take too much on.

JP: in the first instance it's the risk assessment that has been carried out in line with government guidance and union expectation. All the listed items are or have been addressed.

RW: the expectation will be from EYFS, Y1 and Y6 that from 1<sup>st</sup> June they can all, if necessary, return.

SD: parents do seem quite reluctant to send children going back to school at present.

RW: would it be useful to survey the parents of the eligible year groups to see what take up would be.

GJ: we've said that we're trialling the situation as is. Putting in the stricter opening measures as if we're open but not opening as per government guidelines and still only offering care to critical worker and vulnerable children. We are a difficult situation as we are so much bigger than many schools. Once we've trialled it all then we need to do further research etc to look at moving forward and expanding. We're only talking a week or two to do some trialling and further risk assessing.

JP: it's also about trialling the management of adults coming to drop off etc. Before we expand numbers drastically then I think we need to have testing, tracking etc in place. Parents dropping off up to 250 pupils is verging on a large gathering.

HH: is it our responsibility to ensure adults social distance outside school, down Wooler Street whilst they queue to bring children in? I'm not sure that's our responsibility?

JM: I feel we have a big enough responsibility to the children without policing the adults. We worry about the children and their behaviour on our site not when they are on the street.

RW: people are becoming fairly practiced – individual responsibility.

SD: still have staff on the gate greeting?

HH: intend to have a staffmember close to the gate ensuring staggered entry one at a time.

SD: maybe some signs outside to remind? People are getting very practiced at it now.

JP: the risk assessment is very explicit and a good guide. Emphasis on hygiene. How far down the line does learning come? Totally on board with getting this right for the manageable size of group before we open wider. Regard for the home learning which will be continued which will mean staff are doing both in school and at home stuff.

CG: one of my worries is what will children be feeling and their mental health when they are in these 'bubbles' and not in usual groups, rooms etc. can't share, touch, be close to the teacher. That isn't school – what is it going to be like as this expands? I know teachers will do their best to alleviate concerns and things but it is very sad.

RW: this could go on for a year. We need to face up to the fact this isn't going to be going away by mid-June. Other issues from staying at home – not all have the right home life. Most children desperate to get back to school regardless of the required changes. Children aren't necessarily actually accessing home learning.

RW: say we were to get over the maximum – how do we provide a rota to allow them all to come in?

HH: the government isn't allowing rotas for the full year groups. All or nothing. They originally said we could but have now changed it. Would have been more manageable.

JP: fluid situation and maybe this will change. If we have to apply social distancing long term then we cannot have 750 on site. We may need to move to a rota situation to ensure safety. I think it will be reviewed. And changes will need to be made from September if this is still the situation.

TD: LA will have to support schools like us and other large ones.

SD: hopefully the track and trace will be more in place by then.

HH: from 1st June if a child shows symptoms then they go home for 14 days or until negative test. At present approx. 5 day wait for test results to come back. The guidance does not state whether from Day 1 send the whole of that bubble home immediately or do we keep the remaining bubble in until test results back in.

CS: due to shared space, actually it should be all 4 bubbles in that part of the school affected. If test back negative everyone can return.

HH: the ultimate goal is that test results come back fast but that isn't happening now. We need to ensure staff and families are being given the right information so there is no comeback.

CS: it's in the risk assessment but is not explicit whether everyone other than the symptom person needs to be excluded.

TD: is it possible to ask what unions think / adopt a common approach?

HH: we can but common sense prevails – and we need to agree the procedure. All of the bubble self isolate for either 14 days or until negative test result?

**All agreed.**

KH: do we have thermometers in school?

HH: we do, but the guidance is not to take the temperature and use as one of the symptoms.

RW: going to be difficult – coughing isn't always Covid-19. Children cough.

HH: yes – we were sending children home regularly at the start – people cough for no other reason than they need to cough / hay fever etc.

HH: it's a persistent cough – 3 times in an hour as per government guidance.

CS: very clear that we could be sending everyone home for 14 days!

RW: definitely feel the rota idea needs to be reconsidered.

TD: it can't just be us that is having these issues re space etc.

HH: to ensure social distancing you need to remove all the other furniture to ensure you can move around with the appropriate space. The excess furniture is currently being stored in empty classrooms. But if these classrooms then need to be used where will the furniture go? Logistics!

CS: lunchtime – not supposed to use communal spaces like the hall – how will we deliver lunches for a larger number?

SD: do we have to offer a full day?

HH: no rota systems at all including half days. Different groups can't share the same space without deep cleaning.

SD: I mean if we offered mornings only it avoids lunchtime?

CS: guidance is full days

JP: half days are not easier for parents. Everything has an impact for one group or another. Sitting at a desk isn't the usual for smaller children. The quality of the learning / experience needs to be considered alongside the management of the virus – though more long term. Outdoor classroom isn't really an option for our cohorts due to limited space.

TD: I think we just need to see us as a childcare provider rather than an educational provider and then as weeks go on see what starts getting recommended – especially from September – how will we function?

JP: need to have a way to express this range of concerns and receive response to particular cases. Truly appreciate the home learning – so important. Issue is that it isn't being experienced equally. There are families who are struggling – not necessarily just those identified as vulnerable. An awful lot for school to be responsible for at present.

TD: is it worth sending a letter from Scarborough Heads outlining as a group of schools the difficulties to the Secretary of State?

GJ: Heads have been circulating a round robin email to share ideas. Schools reacting differently obviously. But very clear Scarborough parents are going to get differing info depending on the school. Will raise the issues with Matt Blyton re learning and the fact the guidance isn't one size fits all.

JP: can't take all the issue on in one go. Governors' responsibility is to know the situation and hold to account the risk assessment. Do we agree to the proposal of bubbles from 01/06 as the next step?

**All agreed.**

JP: LA are accepting that schools are making their own decisions. The letter to parents is very clear and honest. Once the system is in place we then think about surveying parents to assess the possible increased demand. As governors we have responsibilities around this situation. Concerned about longer term planning and not having the ability to operate the full school if the risk measure continue to next school year. We don't know those factors yet.

JP: anything else for the SLT to raise?

TD: have the government said anything about summer holiday opening / provision?

JP: not been expanded on yet but the current expectation is that schools will not be expected to open.

GJ: staff are allocated for September and will start working with their new classes part time from next week.

JP: anything else?

TD: does school or SD (as Scalby staff) know anything about Y6 transition?

SD: no knowledge yet, focus is on Y10 return at present.

KH: spent time in virtual meetings with secondaries this week. Have been doing as normal, though virtually, between Heads of Y6 and Y7. Ebor and Lady Lumley's still to do. Transition forms have been completed and passed on. None of the secondaries so far have been able to advise how they will recreate a secondary transition day experience. Paperwork is all in place a usual.

JP: school open for key workers in half term?

GJ: Yes.

**Action:** None Required.

## 2. Communication with Parents

TD: the letter to parents is clear. If you do a survey now it will muddy the waters in terms of what is happening.

JP: do we agree the proposed letter to parents for from 01/06?

**All agreed.**

JP: do we need to survey parents of EYFS, Y1 and Y6 down the line?

TD: yes, but not now

RW: I think yes – there will be an expectation that we are obliged to have the children back

CG: I really do feel that there won't be many.

JP: but we are assuming. We need to KNOW. If we actually had quantifiable numbers we could plan? So my proposal would be from 01/06 to conduct a survey?

GJ: I think once we've trialled the new systems for a week. But the guidance may be different by then. I would agree once the bubbles are in place is the right time.

SD: consider as more workers go back they may not want to send kids back but will need to due to work.

HH: because we are not in a position to open to YR,1, 6 but are opening for children of key workers and vulnerable pupils we can insist staff come in for their contractual needs as the 5 standards do not apply. If we open to those year groups and cannot meet the 5 standards staff can be directed by unions to take industrial action.

**Action:** None Required.

## 3. Governor Responsibilities

GJ: governor responsibility – recommend to look at NGA FAQs re Covid-19. The NGA says that the expectation is that school is consulting with the governing body who has an overview. Important to say that governors are not personally liable but the expectation is that you are responsible for the school's conduct – which is why you are being given oversight of our planning. NGA also says schools using governing bodies as a sounding board. Reassure you that we are managing the process.

GJ: governors expected to test the risk assessments once school reopens. Obviously we will need to think about how this is going to happen and see how other schools are doing it? Perhaps can be revisited at the next meeting.

**Action:** None Required.

#### 4. **Longer term plans / A.O.B.**

JP: next meeting will be on Weds 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 1pm. There may be changes and we will have had a couple of days of the new bubbles to refer to. We can respond to arising issues from the letter to parents and start of 'term'.

GJ: thank you for your support

JP: thank you to you and everyone for their contributions at this time – it's difficult but you are all doing great.

JP: received email from Linda Bull – stepping down as staff governor.

KH happy to stay as associate governor.

VL to send round to teachers for expressions of interest.

**Action:** Update records re Linda Bull and email teacher to see if anyone Interested. By: VL

Ended at 2.15pm