

GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Learning to Succeed"

MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

DATE: Tuesday 18th May 2021

TIME: 5.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr. Garry Johnson (Headteacher)
Mr Rainer Brearley
Mr. Peter Southward

Mr. John Munro
Miss V Lewis (Clerk)

Additionally Present:

Ms Jane Pepper (Chair of Governors)
Mrs. Caroline Sarney (Business Manager)

MINUTES

1. Welcome from Committee Chair (2 minutes)

RB welcomed members and John Munro who is attending his first committee meeting. JM thanked governors for the welcome and looks forward to working with the committee.

Action: None Required

2. Apologies for absence; consider acceptance of apologies (2 minutes)

JM: on sick leave at present.

All apologies considered and accepted.

Action: None Required

3. Confidentiality (2 minutes)

There were no items identified as confidential for the purposes of the Minutes.

Action: None Required.

4. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item (2 minutes)

There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

Action: None Required

5. Minutes of the previous meeting on 09.03.21 / Matters Arising (10 minutes)

The Minutes from the meeting on 09.03.2021 were presented and agreed as an accurate record. Proposed by RB and seconded by GJ. Minutes were signed by the Chair electronically and returned to the Clerk for filing / publishing as per procedure.

6. Correspondence (5 minutes)

None received.

Action: None required.

7. Summary Safeguarding Update (5 minutes)

GJ has created a proforma report which can be used for the standing item on each agenda. The report has the following information / data:

- Pupil Numbers on Roll
- Vulnerable caseload
 - 11 Child Protection (*social worker involvement, not voluntary*)
 - 6 Child in Need (*social worker involvement, voluntary*)
 - 4 LAC (2 families)
 - 27 Early Help (*the family needs a bit of agency support*)
 - 45 Other Vulnerable (*outside of eligibility criteria, staff have picked up on something, receive daily welfare checks, varying degrees of involvement and seriousness*)
 - 6 with Safety Plans (*linked with CiN and CP – child has a plan they can follow in the event of something happening at home*)

Q: are there formal triggers for the different levels?

A: anyone can put in a referral at any point. Our CPOMs system records issues, concerns and comments, disclosures etc which build up a picture of need. Though sometimes the children are referred or moved up / down the levels of involvement due to more one off situations and events. Referral can also come from elsewhere such as medical services.

- Emerging Themes:
 - Increase in online bullying, inappropriate use of social media outside of school which is impacting within school. Introduced better support with training for pupils and promoting online safety. Generally, among the older children, links with Tiktok and other social media etc.
 - Issues with inappropriate content and pornography etc. Trying to improve parent involvement and responsibility / duty of care too.
 - Serious incident when the family of a Y6 girl responded to a situation / bullying by verbally and physically assaulting one of the perceived perpetrators. Police and social services now involved.

Q: are vulnerable children spread out across the school or focussed in upper key stages in line with the emerging themes?

A: across the school. There has obviously been further periods of lockdown where the input from school wasn't available so issues are environmental as well.

JP: good opportunity to explore this data and possible links/correlation at a governor visit!

Q: improvement in online issues since implementation of training/education re online safety?

A: yes, still monitoring but definitely seems to have calmed down.

- Exclusions:
 - Two Hubs cater for those at risk of exclusion. Nurture facility with wrap around care, not isolation.
 - 6 children this year
- A: one ½ day and nothing since Autumn.

B: one ½ day and nothing since late Autumn.

C: nothing since February and our return in March. Lower level incidents. Accessing the Hub so dramatic improvement. This child is very vulnerable and there is a big picture with social care involved.

D: one off but serious incident. No re-occurrence.

E: LAC, a lot of issues with the family. Child was accessing the Hub but no issues since Christmas and has phased out of the Hub. Real success.

F: one ½ day and nothing since Autumn.

Q: certainly looks like the Hubs are working and serving their designed purpose.

A: yes, the severity and frequency is definitely decreasing.

- Attendance:

- Difficult to accurately gauge for the whole year due to closure, part attendance, online learning etc so attendance has been calculated based on the periods when school has been fully open to all pupils - 96% which is excellent.
- 1 x Child Missing from Education (CME), County involved with following up, tracing etc and the child is soon due to be removed from our roll.
- 1 x 5 day absence due to injury.
- 1 x child who has relocated to Leeds to live with Dad as Mum is terminally ill. Daily welfare checks where the mentors are speaking to child but Dad not being very proactive re new school.
- 24 x repeatedly late children on the radar. Support procedure to resolve starts with a gentle nudge and conversation with monitoring and then possibly looking at next steps such as either fining or Early Help route.

Governors agreed the attendance level is very positive.

- Other headlines (on this report – Matt Blyton’s visit):

MB has rubber stamped CG and JP’s visits and checks re safeguarding improvements. He is satisfied all areas have been actioned and we are well on the way.

JP: report to follow once cycle of visits completed to show embedding and progress of safeguarding improvements. Been very rigorous regarding all the key aspects MB is looking at. Also examined safeguarding audit in detail and governors took part in the recent bitesize training.

JP: This report is very useful at this stage as a coverall but moving forwards we can perhaps look to tease out the appropriate different aspects dependant on the committee type etc.

Governors agreed the document is very useful and a good summary to be used at each meeting.

GJ also shared ‘Child on a Page’ – every vulnerable child has one of these. At a glance story of the child.

- pupil basic details, photo
- involvement details, timeline of involvement
- summary of the situation and issues
- any notes
- safety plan info if appropriate
- windshield (arrow up = improved, arrow sideways = situation static but need more time, arrow down = no improvement)
- diary of upcoming meetings
- school actions.

Updated after each meeting.

Action: Send Safeguarding Report to governors and file with meeting docs By: GJ/Clerk

8. Health & Safety / Premises Update – Mrs Sarney (10 minutes)

CS referred governors to the previously circulated report. Covid still the overarching concern and issue. Updated risk assessment received following the start of Stage 3 unlocking on 17.5.21 though no major changes for primary schools at this stage. Staff still wearing masks, handwashing lots, bubbles. No cases since before Christmas.

Practice of Lockdown procedure – went well with a few minor issues which we'll address.

HandS adviser came yesterday – all minor things. Fingerguards need replacing in some places. A newly arisen issue following a situation in another school is that the school kitchen needs locking when not in use in case children run in there to hide and / or access equipment. Due to the minimal amount of time our kitchen is unoccupied in our school we have proposed that the door be blocked by a trolley – knives are locked away etc anyway. Adviser is going to check if this is adequate and will feed back. HandS official report and action plan to follow.

Visitor procedure has been changed in line with safeguarding improvements and seems to be working – staff and pupils are challenging those wearing red 'accompanied' lanyards. MSAs are being followed up re this.

Reading Bus planning permission now received. Sourcing the bus at present and quotes provided in the report for lighting and heating, which is a condition of the planning permission. Downside is that it will attract the less than desirables – HandS adviser did say that Reading Buses do tend to attract a high level of incidents but we have ordered improved and expanded CCTV so hopefully that will help.

RB visited for a site survey with CS and audited the asset management plan re prioritisation. Had already booked the decorator to come and for some carpet improvements however we may rethink and upgrade lighting and ceiling works as a better improvement to learning environments.

Action: Circulate HandS Report to governors when received

By: CS

9. Staffing Update (5 minutes)

4 teachers on Fixed term contracts. Carried out selection process and 2 have now been offered established posts with the other two extended for a further year to 31.8.22. The reason all four have not been made established is the uncertainty around ongoing intake numbers. Subsequently had a further resignation and we are currently advertising this post.

Assistant Head fixed term post – factoring in workload and ongoing success we have converted the post to established and offered it internally. We only had one application, from the existing postholder, so she has been appointed to this established post.

Currently recruiting for 1 full time TA and 5 part time Tas. 1 x teacher currently in the Hub will be moving to teach in class so we will need to recruit 1 x HLTA and 1 x TA to support inclusion. **ALL AGREED.**

MSAs – post offered but we never have enough. Advertised again. Difficult to recruit and keep.

Senior Admin Assistant (Finance) post appointed to, hopefully starting mid June before VL leaves to enable a handover period.

Q: are more TAs required because of increased support requirements linked with covid and bubbles etc?

A: we had 2 resignations recently and over the last year we've used a lot of agency supply so we need to recruit to these. Budget c/f is healthy at present so need to use the money to support current cohort.

Plan to ask the new Finance Assistant to assist with the procurement exercise for the new photocopier contract.

Q: is it worth buying the hardware (ie. photocopiers) rather than leasing? Sometimes more economical?

A: still need a maintenance contract but can definitely look into the different options.

JM: I would like to meet with CS, on Monday 24th when in visiting VG and SB possibly? Late morning 11-11.30 agreed.

Action: None required.

10. Finance: 20/21 Outturn & 21/22 Start Budget (20 minutes)

2020/21 Outturn:

Set out variances and reasons in the report, larger carry forward than originally expected.

Covid catch up Grant being utilised in the best way possible and interventions introduced. Monitoring ongoing.

2021/22 Start Budget:

Intake of 83-85 expected September 21. Will run with four classes this year but will need to monitor and reassess for future years. Nothing immediate now but governors need to be aware of the issues relating to reduced intake numbers. Hoping that a good Ofsted and premises improvements with boost intake and interest.

Received Covid Expenditure Funding for all FSM vouchers plus £11k claim paid for extra PPE, Covid resources etc. Unlikely we'll get another claim paid due to our healthy carry forward.

How does the SIP link to the budget:

A lot of the actions in the SIP are carried out by existing staff who do not incur additional costs. Certain costs for training and resources would be included in the SIP and the funding Stream spreadsheet shows the amounts of each type of expenditure the income is used for. Governors welcome to look at this with CS at a visit.

Q: very useful to see the spending by code for each stream. Regarding pupil numbers and the decision to have four classes for a small year group, we are going to have EYFS pupils who have missed a third of their pre school experience. They will need a very specific and particular offer for EYFS. If you think about the cost of the additional teacher and TA in a smaller EYFS the income can justify this.

A: staffing ratios will be really good and be able to deliver what is needed for this cohort. SEND funding takes time to get in place and this often comes in once the children start moving through the school. One positive is additional Pupil Premium income due to an increased number of free school meal applications prompted by the Covid financial support for FSM pupils (£15 per week meal voucher during closure etc).

CS has prepared various start budgets for governors to consider:

- 1) 95 admissions September 21
- 2) 85 admissions September 21
- 3) 85 admissions September 21 and 22

Governors briefly discussed and agreed to opt for Option 1 – Start Budget based on 95 admissions September 2021. JM proposed, RB seconded.

Action: Agree and submit 2021/22 Start Budget

By: CS

11. Approve & Adopt Policies (5 minutes)

FMS004 – Contracts Review Schedule: document provides details of services and contracts the school buys into. Governors should consider and then perhaps revisit at a separate working group meeting or similar. For a lot of areas school buys into the NYCC service and this is intended as best value – for example the economies of scale from the energy contract would be difficult to beat.

Q: some ongoing issues re catering, longer term maybe need to explore options at some stage.

A: *feedback hasn't been great but the caterers are aware of this. Benefit of the service is that absence is covered, training covered etc. Need to monitor and we are getting to the stage of looking at alternative options.*

Noticed now that the FMS team are offering a business review service – but how independent will they be? Let new Finance Assistant bed in and use her fresh eyes.

Action: File as per procedure (intranet, website, paper file)

By: Clerk/SBM

12. A.O.B (5 minutes)

September Intake EYFS – complimentary sweatshirt and / or book bag:

Last year as part of the push to advertise the school we offered a free sweatshirt as an incentive to apply for GRPS. With the upheaval of this school year we have not done this and therefore propose to offer new starters a free book bag/folder as a welcome gift on their first day.

Governors agreed a free book folder with a nice book inside would be a really nice welcome to GRPS.

Action: Order book folders & books

By VL

The Meeting was closed by the Chair at 18:35

Signed R Brearley Dated 16.11.21