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# SIDEGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## NOTES FROM GOVERNING BODY GOOGLE MEET BRIEFING

<b>Date:</b>	18th June 2020 - 7pm
<b>Attendees:</b>	Wendy James - Headteacher Tim O'Keefe - Chair of Governors Mary Hallett - Trust Governor Karen Wesley - Trust Governor Heather Valentine - Staff Representative Matthew Ferrier - Staff Representative Toni Morris - Clerk to the Governors

WJ welcomed Governors to the 'Google Meet' and to provide them with an update on plans for reopening, to seek their approval and ask any questions .

To bring Governors up to speed, WJ summarised the below.

### Delay to Planned Wider Reopening

- 3 weeks ago (half term) we were waiting for a Government announcement about schools opening. Information regarding wider reopening was sent to parents on 30th May however, having then received Union information and listened to radio interviews, this resulted in a discussion with Stephen Chamberlain as WJ wasn't happy about the wider reopening plans. This led to a Parentmail being sent to parents at short notice (31st May) delaying wider reopening plans until 15th June. Stephen Chamberlain said that he (and the ALT Board) supported any headteacher in making a decision that is right for their staff, children and community. WJ acknowledged that this wasn't discussed with Governors and apologised.
- All parents were very supportive. One complaint was sent to our local MP. School reopened for critical worker children and vulnerable children for two weeks from 1st June (Critical worker numbers have increased).
- By not opening as planned, this gave us some downtime and half term we had the opportunity to sort things ready for wider reopening. WJ acknowledged that this wasn't discussed with Governors and apologised.
- Virus cases continued to fall and therefore wider reopening took place on Monday 15th June (3 groups, 10 children in each class invited to come to school on a 3 week rolling rota with Friday as a staff PPA/home learning catchup day, one contact day, two days home learning). Parents have been happy with this system, no complaints received..
- Systems have been set up for people moving around the site and staggered start times, although this seems a little pointless with the low numbers at present but this will change as numbers increase..
- Attendance currently sits at Y6 70-80% and YR/Y1 varies, 50-60%. It has been good to start with these low numbers to gradually increase. Parents have been told that if they change their mind, they can send their children and we are flexible should they wish to just turn up. This system will be repeated again next week.

### **Future Plans for Wider Reopening**

- We plan to open for Y2/3/4/5 with the same 3 day rolling programme, from 29th June for 3 weeks, each group will have four contact days until the end of term.

### **Control Measures**

- Control measures appear to be working and children are good at social distancing but do need reminding, even the little ones can socially distance. They are doing activities alongside other children but in large spaces and we are doing as much as we can outside in different zones.
- Play equipment is regularly cleaned with Milton sterilising fluid, children regularly clean their hands and are using sanitiser as they arrive in the mornings to speed arrival.
- Staff are being very good, have listened to control measures put in place and are checking if they are not sure.
- We are now mixing critical worker children into their classes when their group is in and they will be in critical worker groups on the other days. We explored the pro's and con's and the rationale behind this but if we did not allow children to join their class bubble, children would not see their teacher, would not get the same opportunities and learning experience. The critical worker groups are mixed ages and provide more childcare than learning.
- The Test and Trace criteria states if you have been within 1.5 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes this would be a case for isolation. When adults were asked in school if they had been in contact for more than 15 minutes they said no. They were then asked if children had, and they also said no. We feel our social distancing measures are working and if we had a case, gut feeling is that Public Health England would not ask us to isolate the group. Parents are also very appreciative of this and are aware of our initial worry but think it is the right thing to do.
- MF explained that we are keeping our bubbles down to 10 and facilitating social distancing inside, which are strong mitigating factor to allow us to have to cross bubbles with key worker children. This was in our minds when we were planning. WJ agreed and said this was considered in detail but that it was felt that it was the right thing for the children but nevertheless is still a worry.

### ***KW asked if we had prepared a risk assessment?***

WJ confirmed a large RA has been prepared. To mitigate the risks we decided small groups outside, 10 to the classroom etc. What we have put in place is what the Government had suggested initially to get children in school before the end of term. The Government had also said don't do a rota but we decided this was the right thing to do. They also wanted 15 children in a group but we decided on 10 as with 15 it would be difficult to socially distance.

***MH stated how the Government also says don't worry about socially distancing within bubbles, the school have weighed this up and at the end of the day these are guidelines and not statutory and the school are doing the right thing for the children.***

***KW agreed as this shows the school have considered those aspects, weighed up those issued and decided this is the right thing to do, mitigating those factors,***

MF explained how we are very mindful of the evidence that staff are at greater risk of transmission (children to staff and vice versa). Great consideration was given to how we could accommodate children and staff within the classroom, accommodating 2 adults

allowing for a 2m separation. This was an important factor to reduce the number of children in a bubble.

***KW - now these measures have been in place for, do you feel it is working, any worries still using the same risk assessment.***

WJ confirmed staff feedback is good, that they have not been in close proximity to children for long at all.

**Anxieties from Children and Staff**

- WJ explained how they had to bring EYFS children from the playground and although they said they wouldn't touch children, they had to take the hand of one or two to encourage them into school. They walked them straight to the hand sanitiser, they did their hands, and we did ours too which felt the right thing to do. By waiting for a couple of weeks to implement a wider reopening, this has allowed us to feel more comfortable with the evidence of numbers going down and no peaks forming. Most staff have been absolutely fine. Some have had a wobble but have most felt comfortable.
- MF confirmed that teaching staff have been positive and have been able to do focussed input with small groups of children, which has been beneficial. MF needs to follow up on how the 2 days home learning is working but the teaching content and context has been quite productive and beneficial. Yes, some staff have had a wobble but this is to be expected as it is a different way of working and people not knowing what to expect.
- MF has been completing risk assessments with BAME staff, some who haven't been in school for a while. Questions were not about procedures but about how staff were feeling, the atmosphere in school, how children are responding. MF has been able to respond positively. It is nice to hear children's voices in school and the children have been positive too and have enjoyed their time. Groups are not in their normal friendship groups and that has worked well too but this feels right. As we plan for wider reopening, MF feels comfortable that we can facilitate procedures without being too challenging. Pinch points are around access to toilets, not problematic with our present numbers (90) but children have been sensibly waiting outside if necessary. The weather has been good for outside learning, with good traditional core subject learning outside.

**Outside Facilities**

- WJ explained how facilities have been set up outside, tables/gazebos etc. (clipboards on order to work on outside). HV has been amazing and all children have their own individual stationery pack. A military operation and during half term classrooms were cleared of surplus furniture, with meeting rooms being used to store this. Children have responded well too.

**Home Learning**

- Home learning is going well.
- By not opening to children on a Friday (only for key workers), staff have ½ day for PPA/ ½ day for home learning.
- Seesaw data
  - Over the past 7 days, 4000 posts/activities by children.
  - Weekly around 5000 activities added by children.
  - 8/10 pieces of work per child every week.
  - Within 8 weeks 40,000 activities.
  - 2,644 comments by teachers from teachers this week..
- Teachers are responding and feeding back. Some get likes, some get feedback.

- As more teachers return to school, we are using teachers who are not currently in school (pregnant/vulnerable categories) to support home learning.
  - 2 teachers in EYFS pregnant
  - 2 teachers in Y1 vulnerable
  - 1 teacher in Y2 pregnant
  - 1 teacher in Y3 vulnerable
  - All Y4/5 teachers will be in school but we are exploring using an SSC teacher to provide them with release time by holding forest schools activities each week outside to reduce contact.
  - 1 teacher in Y6 pregnant

### **Further Questions from Governors**

#### ***KW have most staff returned to school?***

Anyone in the clinically vulnerable category is not being asked to come into school as yet. We have one member of staff in the extremely clinically vulnerable category. Apart from that everyone is in but we cannot ask the extremely clinically vulnerable children in school as they cannot socially distance themselves. They can work from home and socially distance themselves, completing family calling etc. WJ will be talking to site staff tomorrow to discuss which staff members are coming into school to complete cleaning.

Exploring rotas about bringing more people in. We cannot have a TA for each class but will have a 'runner' for each year group to gather resources/clean areas rather than being with all 30 children.

#### ***KW - what about the Y6 transition?***

The high schools are doing things differently. Copleston have put together some lessons which children can access on their learning platform and videos to watch, which have been shared with us. There was some confusion but we informed parents that when the Y6 children come into school they can complete these. Northgate have sent a video of a school tour which we have seen a link too. High schools are also writing to schools independently but not copied us in but we need to support families. Teri Tanner has been talking to the SENCO at high schools about extra tuition. We have not been offered any opportunity for Y6 to visit the high school, even in small groups. MH explained that there have been videos prepared for individual subject; A short clip with something to investigate, not too onerous for parents, to tease their interests. WJ explained how she had spoken to Copleston because their lessons formed a timetable but some of the children would have been in school at Sidegate. They explained that the children could do the maths, english and science activities as a priority.

We are exploring reception transition. The last two days of the summer term, Monday 20th/Tuesday 21st no children will be in school and we are going to use these days for a reception transition and maybe a Y6 farewell in their class bubbles. Perhaps a socially distanced with parents with a picnic and a socially distanced bbq for children on the field. However, we need to wait before this is advertised to explore rules and regulations around mass gatherings.

We are starting to think about September. We are thinking of practicalities, planning a normal timetable with 30 children in each class. We may have to make assumptions that the 2 metre will be at 1m which means we could take 15 children in each class. An idea is for a temporary timetable, 2 days in 2 days out, 1 day PPA for teachers to sort out in-school

and home learning, unless there is a peak over summer. Looking at today, if we did 2 days in 2 days out, we would still have critical workers. We do not enough space so we are looking at a larger, more substantial 'party tent' (approx. £1,200) where we could accommodate critical worker children on field for September/October before the weather turns. This would have electric, space heaters, wifi etc. With regard to the curriculum, we are not worried about this at present. We can catch them up. Pixl are providing assessment resources for the autumn term to work out where the children are at and then explore to plug any gaps (class or individuals). If the Government releases funding (leaked to the press) for tutors, we could use the money to employ additional staff.

***MH - what if we go into lockdown again, will you return to previous models.***

WJ confirmed yes this would be the case but we have models which work. Ideally it would be better to have a second peak over the summer and no September/October/November. Maybe this is why the Government want children back 15 in a class to encourage this but we are not playing their game.

***TOK - my question was whether we have enough staff to bring back as well as the space to accommodate them but you have answered this above. Do we have to bring back Y2/3/4/5 back?***

WJ stated that we have risk assessed this and the gut feeling and RA says it will be ok. Our critical workers have been so good not to overload the groups and everyone has been so good. We are very lucky. .

***MH - Northgate are moving towards interactive lessons, but it feels like the students are drifting away from us. I'm getting used to screencasts/teams etc. Are Sidegate going down that route?***

WJ explained that if Y2/3/4/5 return the week after next, we won't have capacity but we have been holding 'Google Meets' with new class teachers, groups of 10 children can have interactive chats and show things to their teacher. These 'Meets' have received very good feedback. Anna Heaven (Y6), Charlotte Reynolds and Emma Annis (Y1) have been teaching from home via an interactive platform. An HLTA has been taking the class and the teachers then join the class interactively to teach from home. We haven't seen this in person though.

MF explained that interactive lessons have been spoken about, how these would work for primary aged children. Teaching is so interactive with the children and if we were going to do this longer term we would need to look at how this would work. Seesaw has a facility for teachers to record videos/modelling for children to use in advance to work independently and support home learning.

The Trust are doing a lot of work on this and have asked us to nominate home learning lead and are keen to learn from each other (blended learning - face to face and home learning). These things will grow and evolve over time, depending on how long we have to do this for. Cannot see keeping primary school children off for the whole year but the learning has to be manageable for teachers, trying to do two jobs..

***MH - have teachers been using the Oak Academy resources?***

WJ confirmed that teachers can tap into Oak academy, but can link through Seesaw to BBC bitesize. Teachers shouldn't reinvent the wheel and sometimes it is quicker to put together something bespoke yourself. We have teachers working on home learning too to

share the load. We need to look at what we can give parents during the summer break. Perhaps paper resources packs, for basic skills and we will close down the learning platform. We have no intention of opening over the summer holiday. Teachers and staff have contracts for a specific number of working weeks. We have lots of building work happening at school. The Government needs to support critical workers, who have been told to stay in their bubbles, as Cabin Crew won't be opening either.

***HV - a couple of staff were nervous to come back but after a few days, the school has had a good atmosphere and it is nice to see children back, calm and peaceful.***

### **Uniform**

- We have been very relaxed about what children are wearing. Some have been wearing uniform, others their own clothes.

### **Mental Health**

- We did some work around mental health this week. We sent parents a video for children so they could see what to expect when they return to school. Parents have prepared their children very well.

### **Complaint from Parent**

- Stephen Chamberlain helped with the complaint which was sent to our local MP from a parent. The response was through our PR company.

Meeting closed 8:00pm